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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this bulletin is to assist Alabama administrators, supervisors and teachers in providing a kindergarten program of learning experiences appropriate for 5-year-old children. The bulletin is divided into six sections encompassing different aspects of kindergarten education. Ten goals for the kindergarten program are suggested in Section 1. In Section 2 the physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and language characteristics of the 5-year-old are discussed in narrative form and then presented in convenient charts together with implications for the teacher. The section on the program (Section 3) offers suggestions for physical facilities as well as for developing habitual behavior patterns, deep appreciations, wholesome attitudes, creative expression, independent thinking and problem solving via narrative and charts organized in terms of knowledge and understandings, skills, attitudes, and implications for teachers. How parents can become involved in the teaching-learning process is explored in Section 4. The final sections (Sections 5 and 6) are concerned with practical aspects of organizing the kindergarten such as administration, staff, budget, safety and public relations, and the necessity for a continuous developmental program. A bibliography is provided for each section and a list of professional organizations and additional sources of information is appended. (Author/RH)

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ALABAMA

KINDERGARTENS

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Preface

The State Department of Education is committed to quality programs for five-year-olds. The publication *Alabama Kindergartens* is an important resource for administrators and educators since it represents the work of early childhood specialists from all areas of education. Dealing with all aspects of early childhood from parents to administration, *Alabama Kindergartens* should be particularly useful as the state moves toward a statewide kindergarten program.

Wayne Teague
State Superintendent of Education

Montgomery, Alabama
March, 1977

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Foreword

This bulletin is designed to assist kindergarten teachers in providing a program of learning experiences appropriate for five-year-old children. The major concerns of the teachers as they work with children are:

1. The development within the child of a realistic self-image.
2. The development of the child's ability to communicate through the expression of his ideas and feelings.

Progress in the attainment of these two goals helps the child gain self-confidence, social acceptance, greater understanding of the world, and increased competence in communicating with others and in dealing with the physical and human aspects of his world.

This bulletin is a revision of *Alabama Kindergartens* published in 1969 and reprinted in 1970. The following people were primarily responsible for that bulletin: Mr. O. M. Bratton, State Department of Education; Dr. Frankie G. Ellis, Tuskegee Institute; Dr. Mildred Ellisor, Auburn University; Dr. Zelia Evans, Alabama State University; Dr. Mary Jo Harris, University of South Alabama; Dr. Elizabeth Lewis, The University of Alabama; Miss Lulu Palmer, State Department of Education; Dr. Rebecca Pate, Alabama College; Dr. Curtis Sellers, Huntsville City Schools; Mr. Oscar Zeanah, Andalusia City Schools.

This edition was revised under the direction of Dr. Mildred Ellisor, Professor of Education; Dr. Louise Valine, Assistant Professor; and advanced graduate students of Auburn University. It was coordinated by Mrs. Louise S. Higgins, Chief Specialist, and Mr. William C. Ward, Specialist, of the Early Childhood Unit, Division of Instruction, Alabama State Department of Education.

Special appreciation is expressed to the Huntsville City School System for their cooperation in providing pictures for the bulletin and to the State Advisory Committee for Early Childhood Education for their advice and assistance.

Since kindergartens are now becoming an integral part of the public school systems, the materials contained in this bulletin should give direction and assistance to administrators, supervisors, and teachers as different schools develop programs at the kindergarten level.

LeRoy Brown
State Superintendent of Education

Montgomery, Alabama
September 1975

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Point of View

The optimum development of children requires simultaneous growth in physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and aesthetic areas. This development is a continuous process; but it is not always orderly or smooth, and sometimes occurs in spurts of growth.

The kindergarten is frequently the first experience which children have with organized education. It should provide continuity of experiences which promote growth, challenge thinking, and encourage the development of many new skills--cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. It is not merely a readiness period for entry into first grade. Rather, it fulfills a need in its own right by providing a general education which touches all forms of human knowledge. Its value is in providing opportunities for maximizing the growth of children. These assertions justify the inclusion of the kindergarten as a part of the ongoing regular school program.

Recent research and experimentation show that children can learn many things at an earlier age than was formerly considered possible. The first five years of a child's life are crucial ones for developing his potentialities for human effectiveness; and growth gains are accelerated by the guidance of sensitive, questioning, curious, stimulating, and understanding teachers in an organized educational setting. Some research findings indicate that by age three, fifty percent of children's mental abilities are developed and by age eight, eighty percent are developed (Bloom).

GOALS FOR THE KINDERGARTEN

1. **To develop a positive self-image.** A good kindergarten helps a child develop a positive self-concept. He needs to be accepted and to feel that other people believe in him. As a good learner he must see himself as having the possibilities for learning and dealing adequately with situations. An atmosphere conducive to self-expression within socially acceptable limits enhances the growth of self-esteem, while an atmosphere of repression causes it to decline. If people accept a child, his reflection will be one of a liked, wanted, able person; if they reject him, he sees himself as a failing, ineffectual, unsuccessful individual. A child's feelings are important in his sense of success or failure. The kindergarten provides opportunities for him to develop a sense of personal

identity and integrity, to experience a sparkle of excitement which will help him reach his subjective self, and to use his imagination to help him reach these ends.

2. **To assist the child in his social and emotional development.** A child who has many opportunities to interact with other people, to express his ideas and to listen to others, learns to communicate in social relations. Likewise, a child who develops a sense of trust and confidence in adults responsible for him and who learns to understand why he feels as he does, increases his competency to deal with his emotions. The kindergarten should help the child handle his feelings in conflict with others and to express and deal with his own and the feelings of others in constructive ways.

3. **To assist the child in acquiring basic concepts and developing problem-solving abilities.** The curriculum of a good kindergarten includes a carefully planned variety of experiences for developing linguistic skills, perceptual and conceptual skills. Among other things, it provides experiences that increase the child's understanding of the world around him and how to live well in it. It increases his facility in communicating ideas and feelings, promotes growth in independence and initiative, and develops desirable habits and attitudes. Skills in problem solving include growth in the processes of inquiring, observing, generalizing, experimenting, discovering, classifying, verifying, and quantifying.

4. **To develop communication skills.** The ability to communicate is a vital part of growing up. The acquisition of skill with words and the comprehension of ideas that sprout from thoughts behind words are probably the most essential prerequisites for formal learning. In addition to many opportunities to talk and listen, the kindergarten child needs many concrete experiences which will give something to talk about and will help him to add to his ever-growing vocabulary in a meaningful way. Growth in this area should lead to effectiveness in both verbal and nonverbal communication skills.

5. **To provide an atmosphere that will stimulate the natural interests of the child in the world around him.** One basis for a child's learning is his tremendous curiosity. The kindergarten should capitalize on this tendency and help him explore the world around him. The first five years of a child's life appear to be the most crucial period for building a broad foundation of experiences for future learnings. During this period he needs people to talk with, things to explore, trips to take, sights to see, new sounds to hear,

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and stories read to him. An exploration and understanding of the child's immediate world leads to his subsequent understanding of the world concept.

6. **To help the child develop self-discipline.** The kindergarten helps the child develop self-discipline by encouraging him to plan activities, accept responsibility for his acts, share with others, make and obey rules, and care for his own property as well as that of others. It helps him determine his limits in order to understand them, test them, and revise them as necessary. It increases his capacity for self-direction. In a world of change or unexpected interruptions and varying demands, children and adults need to have flexibility and resiliency to meet change.

7. **To develop perceptual motor skills, muscular coordination, physical fitness, and sound health and safety habits.** One of the most obvious and observable needs of young children is shown in their struggle to learn to use their bodies efficiently, to reach, lift, walk, run, jump, and climb. A kindergarten with basic and imaginative materials and equipment can offer many opportunities for exploring a wide variety of body movements. A child's attitude about himself and his motivation for improvement can be enhanced through good physical activity and health instruction.

8. **To detect mental, social, emotional, or physical handicaps which are more easily corrected or alleviated at an early age.** A good kindergarten is an excellent screening center for identifying a child who may need special help in these areas. It is well recognized that the earlier physical, mental, social, and emotional problems are identified, the easier it is to work out effective solutions. The kindergarten may serve the entire school system as a detection center for follow-up referrals.

9. **To develop respect for property and the rights of others, instill love of country, and develop citizenship values.** A kindergarten affords many opportunities to guide a child in learning basic economic and citizenship concepts. It should teach young children the value of putting away equipment and materials, removing and caring for their wraps, being sensitive to the rights of others and respectful to all people. It also affords an opportunity for children to practice ethical behaviors and good citizenship traits in a wholesome environment. These include, among other things, recognizing rules and laws, appreciating persons who are responsible for enforcing rules and laws, developing a love for our country, and expressing a positive feeling toward our country.

10. **To provide for the development of aesthetic expression and an appreciation of the aesthetic world.** A kindergarten teacher is challenged to provide many means for stimulating and channeling a child's imagination, ingenuity, and creativity. The kindergarten is concerned with helping a child acquire facility and satisfaction in creative expression. It helps a child respond to, evaluate, and respect beauty in things and people. It increases the child's awareness and appreciation of the beauty in the world around him.

Research indicates that the kindergarten can help develop the human resources of our nation and maintain our democratic way of life. Among the desirable values to be developed are respect for the dignity and importance of the individual, the need to seek common purposes, a positive concept of self, good relationships with others, growth in learning, service to others, and a desire to exhibit proper conduct. The kindergarten curriculum should provide for these values.

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Five-Year-Olds

WHO ARE THEY?

The children in our kindergartens are five-year-olds. They are children of all the American people--native- and foreign-born, rural and urban, rich and poor, and all social levels. They are youngsters who need the early educational stimulation of a good kindergarten environment.

Five-year-olds are interacting personalities. They are curious about people and things in this new school environment. They are individualists. While most of them are five years of age, hardly any two of them are exactly alike. Some are ready to break away from their mothers, while others may still feel the need to cling. Some are frightened and wide-eyed. Others are meek and silent. Some are sure of themselves. Many know how to disguise their true feelings and emotions through aggressive behavior.

Five-year-olds are usually verbal. The most popular word in their vocabulary is "I." Much of the child's manner of speaking and extent of vocabulary is determined by the socioeconomic status of the family and the verbal experiencing he has had in early years. Here the range of usage may vary in the five-year-old from the child who does not respond verbally at all (this is rare), to the child who answers in one-word sentences, to the child who responds in compound and complex sentences. The home and community contribute to his preparatory experiences in language.

Since five-year-olds tend to be farsighted, recognition of this limitation at an early age is important. In addition to the immature development of the eye muscles, other finer muscles of the body are also in the early stages of development.

Five-year-olds, if generally healthy, are interested in many things. Animals, plants, and machines fascinate them. Much of their learning is based on observation and experiencing.

Through observation, experience, and research, it is possible to develop a general picture of what a five-year-old is like. This does not mean that all five-year-olds are alike. It does mean that general characteristics and needs can be identified which can then serve as a framework for decisions which must be made in developing a good program for kindergarten children.

Teachers need to know and understand these general characteristics of growth and development in young children in order to know what subsequent emotions may present blocks to learning. For example, five-year-olds in general are quite active. Activity for the young child is necessary for growth and health. Long periods of forced inactivity may cause the child to feel fatigued, frustrated, and restless. Knowing this, the teacher would provide many opportunities for vigorous activity, scheduling frequent play periods and including activities which involve different parts of the body. The young child should not be expected to sit still for long periods of time.

The accompanying charts, "Developmental Characteristics of the Five-Year-Old," may help the teacher more nearly see the world through the eyes of the child. The charts are not intended to stereotype any five-year-old, nor lead us to categorize him and thus ignore the fact that every five-year-old is a unique individual. A program based on such concepts without provision for a wide range of individual differences in development would surely fail to provide for the optimal development of each child as a person. They should provide some starting points for appraisal of the needs of kindergarteners, but not serve as ends in themselves.

The characteristics and needs of the five-year-old offered in the following charts are not exhaustive. The teacher should develop her own list as she observes her students and use it to make decisions and plan programs to meet individual needs within the group.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD

	PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
1.	Very active; large muscles better developed than small muscles. Needs large-muscle activities such as running, climbing, etc.	Provide equipment, space and time for sufficient large muscle activities. Provide activities involving different parts of the body. Avoid long periods of inactivity.
2.	Finer muscle skills, in the use of fingers, hands, eyes, tongue, though developing rapidly are still immature.	May become tired and strained if adults set over-precise standards or require prolonged efforts at detailed work. What may strain him at one point in his development may be an easy activity if delayed for awhile. Provide large crayons and paint brushes, and large sheets of art paper.
3.	Energetic but easily fatigued. Needs both indoor and outdoor play with periodic rest periods.	Balance strenuous activities with quiet ones. Provide opportunities for rest. This may be coordinated with quiet music or looking at books. Children should not be expected to sit still for long periods of time.
4.	Physical factors influence abilities to function well in all areas. Adequate rest and diet are necessary.	Irritability and fatigue may be the result of inadequate food and/or rest. Nourishing snacks and meals are a desirable part of the program.
5.	Susceptible to infections and accidents; may develop poor posture. Needs guidance in health habits and safety precautions.	Teach good health habits, proper care of the teeth, and good safety precautions. Incorporate these into the daily school program. Encourage proper use of lavatory facilities and other health practices.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD

SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
1. Plays well with groups, but tolerance for large groups is limited. Prefers to play alone and in small groups.	Provide ample time for individual and group activities. Allow for independent choice of activities.
2. Self-centered but becoming more sociable. Independent and a responsible member of a group but still has strong need for a sense of "belonging" in a group.	Provide many opportunities for sharing, such as getting materials, doing special tasks. Provide a warm, friendly, secure environment in which the child can learn responsibility to himself and to others. Provide activities in keeping with each child's ability to succeed. Encourage acts of courtesy and responsibility.
3. Develops an awareness of ownership	Provide space, materials, and encouragement through which respect for own property and that of others is promoted.
4. Needs to become independent and self-directive.	Let him do as much for himself as he is capable of doing, but help when assistance is needed.
5. Generally responsive to adults and eager to please.	Be genuine in praising accomplishments and in making requests.
6. Relatively stable, but may occasionally engage in socially unacceptable behavior (subject to expressions of fear, anger, defensiveness, and jealousy from time to time).	Encourage child to help develop own rules of conduct, to make decisions and to help solve problems. Direct his aggressiveness from undesirable to more desirable behavior. Help the child to acknowledge his emotions and to handle them in constructive ways.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD

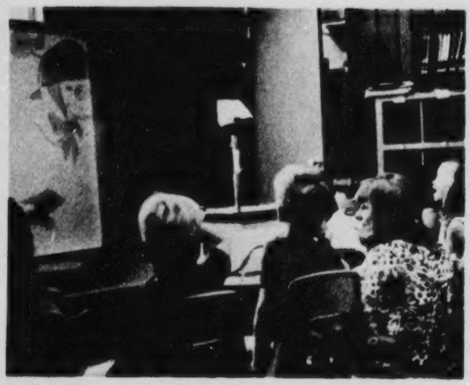
	EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
1.	Seeks warmth and security in relationships with adults.	Become acquainted with each child as an individual. Provide appropriate attention.
2.	Likes to work, to achieve and to enjoy a sense of accomplishment.	Provide opportunities for all children to succeed in some area every day. Praise child for his efforts and help him to deal with both success and failure.
3.	Likes to know what to expect. Usually wants to please. Seeks approval from adults.	Provide a stable, secure atmosphere where expectations are realistic and are known. Plan with the children in setting standards of behavior.
4.	Wants recognition and needs to learn acceptable ways for gaining attention. Needs to feel that he belongs and is "somebody."	Provide acceptable ways for gaining recognition. Give deserved praise. Help each child to make friends and to be an accepted member of the group. Promote understandings of behaviors of self and others.
5.	Usually dependable and cooperative, but occasionally displays lack of self-control. Needs guidance in purposeful use of energies.	Provide many interesting and motivating materials and activities. Build on individual as well as group interest. Plan specific activities to teach responsibility. Help him to become a responsible member of the group. Help him to know that he is accepted even when his behavior is not.
6.	Is developing a sense of humor and needs to be able to share this with others.	Show tolerance and acceptance of his humor. Look for opportunities to laugh with him, through personal experiences, stories, poems, songs, etc.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD

	INTELLECTUAL CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
1.	Curious; wants to learn about many things. Learns best by experience and observation.	Nurture curiosity. Provide many opportunities for observing, imitating, examining, investigating, exploring, and questioning.
2.	Learns through a variety of experiences and materials.	Provide experience with concrete materials. Use a variety of methods and materials.
3.	Develops a longer attention span.	Provide activities consistent with the child's attention span and interest.
4.	Vivid imagination, but is able to distinguish between fact and fantasy. Learns through play.	Provide role-playing situations, imaginative activities, books, records, films, other materials. View play as a worthwhile learning experience.
5.	Enjoys intellectual challenges. Needs varying kinds and forms of mental stimulation. Also needs to be allowed time to solve problems and not be rushed to an adult response.	Encourage thinking in discussions and simple problem solving. Encourage wide use of learning materials to broaden interests. Provide an intellectually stimulating environment.
6.	Enjoys creative activities. Needs encouragement and opportunity to grow intellectually through creativity.	Provide materials and tools for creative activities, such as paper, paint, construction materials, etc. Encourage originality in all endeavors, as art, music, dramatic play, etc. Make no comparisons with adult models.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD

	LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
1.	Rapid language development. Interested in words; enjoys rhymes, "toying" with words, repetition of words and sounds.	Provide many experiences with language through discussion, puppets, dramatics, role playing, etc.
2.	Likes books and stories. Needs to associate enjoyment with books.	Read to the child every day. Provide many good experiences with a great variety of good books. Encourage participation and retelling stories through naming, touching, and repeating phrases; and dramatic play or role playing.
3.	Expresses himself in the sound system, grammar, and vocabulary heard most often at home or in neighborhood.	Accept the child's language patterns. Talk with the child and provide a model or method for speech improvement. Provide an atmosphere conducive to oral communication.
4.	Continues to develop understanding of abstract words.	Provide expanded and substantive experiences to further in-depth understandings of abstract words.
5.	Needs to be free from tension when speaking.	Work toward a tension-free atmosphere which gives ample opportunity for talking and listening.
6.	Asks many relevant questions.	Provide problem-solving experiences. Help child with answers to questions.



WHAT DO THEY NEED?

Five-year-olds need experiences which will help them grow and develop in many ways. These experiences should be planned to help children to:

broaden their understandings of a changing world;
identify themselves as worthy, unique personalities;
develop skill in critical thinking and ability to solve problems;
grow in ability to communicate effectively;
satisfy natural curiosity about the world around them;
learn discipline of self in relations to others and new life situations;
develop physical fitness, muscular coordination, and locomotor skills for living in a world of technology;
learn respect for others and for the property of others;
experience opportunities to express themselves creatively and to learn to appreciate life's beauty; and
grow in development of personal values.

Individual differences in five-year-olds indicate that some children's needs may be specific ones growing out of these more general classifications. Some teachers may need to work more intensely on developing self-confidence in some children, while skill in making other five-year-olds feel loved and wanted is necessary for their optimum functioning.

In summary, five-year-olds need experiences to help them develop sequentially in achieving their developmental tasks. Teachers should make use of all available information concerning each child in order to provide appropriate experiences. The emotional climate the teacher creates, the guidance she is able to give each child through her understanding of his needs, and her ability to meet these needs, determine to a large extent, the success or failure of the educational program.

HOW WILL KINDERGARTEN HELP THEM?

There can be little doubt that the early years are the crucial years. Psychologists point out that the first five years of a child's life constitute the period of most rapid growth in physical and mental characteristics and are the years of greatest susceptibility to environmental influences.

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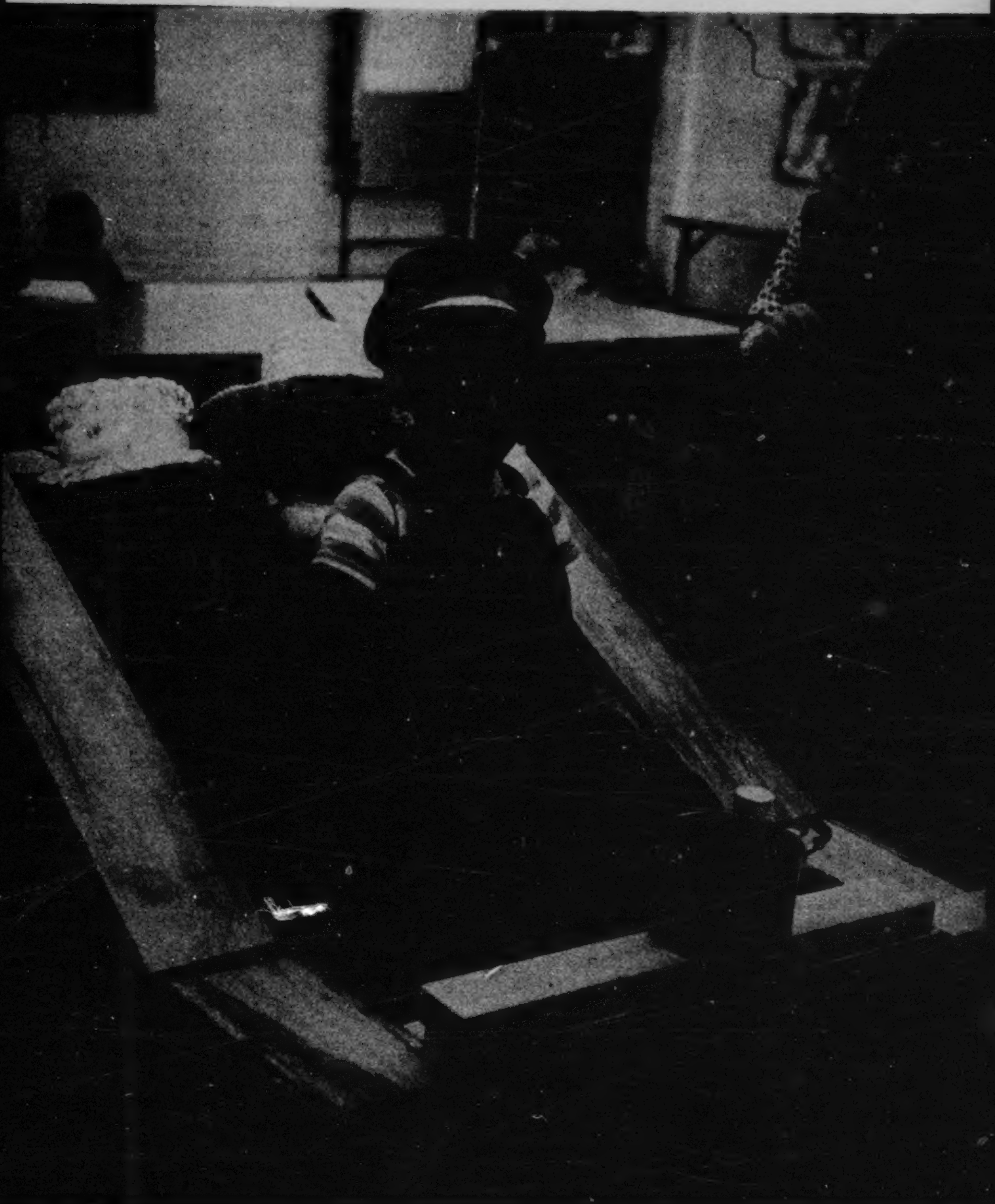

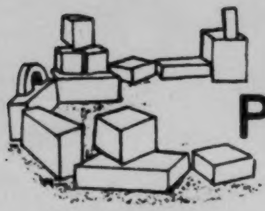

Program

THE KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

Program development for the kindergarten-age child requires resourcefulness and careful planning by the teacher. The teacher must have purposes clearly in mind as she works with the children. She must then plan the program so that those purposes may be accomplished in a variety of ways. The program must be flexible so that interests of the moment can be met without losing sight of the overall purposes.

The following section is not meant to be prescriptive. It is hoped that the suggested ideas will help the teacher of kindergarten-age children to see a variety of ways in which she can work with children. The program ideas are organized around five purposes which should be considered in developing the curriculum. These are:

I. DEVELOPMENT OF HABITUAL BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

II. DEVELOPMENT OF DEEP APPRECIATIONS

III. DEVELOPMENT OF WHOLESOME ATTITUDES

IV. DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION

V. DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENT THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

The program planned by the teacher is the heart of the kindergarten. The equipment and materials provided for use by the children and the way in which these are arranged within the room determine in some measure the direction the curriculum will take. Since the equipment and its arrangement is such a vital factor in the curriculum, special attention is given to these factors in this section. Attention is also given to plans for organizing the kindergarten day.

I. Development of Habitual Behavior Patterns

The responses of individuals to the various stimuli confronted daily may be classified as habitual behavior. Habitual behavior to certain situations is necessary if the individual is to be free to use his intelligence in facing the more complex aspects of daily living. Desirable habitual behaviors are formed through continuous teacher guidance of the child's participation.

The kindergarten experience is for most children the first organized educational experience. He is thus at the stage when he is still forming his habitual behavior patterns. It is, therefore, imperative that the kindergarten teacher pay special attention to habits which should be formed and to establishing those habits in children. The routine of the kindergarten needs to be closely examined for behaviors which should become automatic. These should then be singled out for special teaching. The kindergarten teacher may develop automatic behavior patterns in two ways, namely, (1) by demonstrating desirable patterns in her own daily actions and (2) by guiding children in developing desirable patterns in their own behavior.

The following examples illustrate what the teacher may do without the need for giving special thought to them: being on time or a few minutes early for school or assignments; being patient when interrupted; being kind and courteous. These and other automatic behavior patterns will relieve the teacher of special thoughts of these acts and, therefore, free her mind for solving more complex problems.

Examples of automatic behavior patterns to be developed in children are: responding to a fire drill alarm; knowing safe ways to enter and leave the room; taking proper care of their possessions; cleaning up after work, lunch, or activities; practicing proper standards for eating; using bathroom facilities properly; and accepting classroom responsibilities.

The role of the kindergarten teacher is a vital one in establishing desirable behavior in these and many other areas. It requires thinking through each process and deciding on a way to carry it through successfully. It requires helping children to understand not only what is required of them but why it is required. It requires consistently seeing that children carry out the desired behavior until it is indeed automatic. It also requires patience, for habits are not established in a day or a week. Much of the teacher's time and energy during the first few months of the school year may go into the supervision of tasks which should become habitual. If the teacher is consistent and patient, she will be amply rewarded later. The establishment of automatic behavior patterns is necessary to make democratic control possible in the classroom and subsequently in life.

Standards of behavior and degree of automation attained will vary from one individual to another in the same classroom. As in other areas, the teacher must recognize the individuality of her pupils and plan for them accordingly. Special efforts should be made, however, to help all children establish some of the basic habitual behaviors.

The chart which follows gives some examples of what might be done to help children develop selected habitual behaviors. It should be noted that this list is by no means inclusive. The teacher will think of many other behaviors which should become automatic with the children and will work to develop these. This list is intended to be suggestive only of some ways in which the teacher may work as she plans to develop habitual behaviors through the program.

CHART I

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED HABITUAL BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

SUBJECT	KNOWLEDGES AND UNDERSTANDINGS	SKILLS	ATTITUDE	IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS
1. Leaving and returning to room	Take turn; respect others' rights	Speed; orderliness	Awareness of rights of others; appreciation of orderliness	Teach concepts; emphasize "why" as well as "how"
2. Eating	Await turn; use of dishes for different purposes; cleanliness through proper use of dishes	Handling dishes and silver; respecting other people's needs and wants; orderliness in handling different types of things	Awareness of the value of food; conservation of food; sharing food; appreciating various tastes and textures of foods	Teach by precept and example. Make mealtime pleasant situation; initiate pleasant conversation
3. Using supplies and facilities	How and why to select appropriately, conserve, share	Quietness; orderliness; habitually returning to proper place	Expressing appreciation for items; showing spirit of cooperative use; expressing desire to conserve	Teach the value of public property and how to use and conserve supplies and facilities; have children participate in planning
4. Resting	Awareness of need for relaxation; awareness of the necessity for quietness	Ability to relax	Acceptance of rest as a means of relaxing	Teach concepts; provide space and equipment; plan for the rest period; time the rest period
5. Using bathroom	Take turns; remove clothing; use of toilet; wash and dry hands; return to classroom; selection of boys or girls bathroom, if applicable; rights of the individual; why and how to unfasten and fasten; why and how to flush; value of soap, water, and towel; conserve time	Calmness; quietness; fastening clothes; speed; use of soap and water; thoroughness; placement of used towels; automatically selecting the right lavatory; using paper economically	Natural acceptance of elimination process; acceptance of values of cleanliness; respect for rights of others; building respect for privacy; feeling responsible for use of time	Teach concepts; demonstrate concepts; have children participate in planning for this task
6. Greeting guests	How to speak; what to say; politeness; pleasantness	Relating verbal and nonverbal expression	Awareness of the worth of each individual	Teach and demonstrate concepts; serve as model

II. Development of Deep Appreciations

One of the goals of education prescribes the development of deep appreciations. This suggests that appreciations be acquired and expressed. It further suggests that teachers guide children in obtaining knowledge and understandings necessary for appreciations and in expressing these feelings verbally and nonverbally.

Kindergarten teachers have a splendid opportunity to develop a genuine feeling of gratitude in children. The sense avenues of touch, taste, smell, sound, and sight may be used to develop appreciations. Softness, size, shape, and weight of touch; deliciousness of taste; the aroma of smell; the melodiousness and variations of sound; and the pleasantness and variations of sight are appreciative qualities that may be developed through sensory experiences.

Teachers may also develop appreciations through a recognition of values in a child's work. Expressing delight in the work a child does in cleaning up, in selecting colors for paintings, or in recognizing the noble acts of classmates may have lasting effects in this area.

Among other things, the kindergarten child should acquire an appreciation of his own personal worth, of other people, of natural forces, and of the finer things of life. These acquisitions will help him live nobly, courageously, hopefully, and optimistically.

The kindergarten is a source which may supply the insight and techniques for developing appreciations during a crucial period of the child's life. The data which follow give a few examples of the ways the teacher can develop deep appreciations in children.

CHART II

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED DEEP APPRECIATIONS

SUBJECT	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDINGS	SKILLS	ATTITUDE	IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER
1. Home and Family	Recognizing how they contribute to one's needs and comfort and how one should be a helper; attitudes and behavior necessary for a happy home and group life	Human relationship skills; performing simple homemaking tasks	Appreciation of contributions of the family members; being willing to contribute to the family's welfare	Allow children to dramatize home tasks; teach the acceptance of family members and human relationship traits
2. People	Different types of people; the contribution of others and their problems	Human relationship skills (Courtesy, respect, kindness, cooperation, tolerance)	Acceptance of different types of people; respecting others; gratitude for services of others	Allow children to dramatize home tasks; teach the acceptance of family members and human relationship traits
3. Rhythmic Expression	Rhythmic movement; interpreting movements; creative movements; realizing the range and limitations of bodily movements	Using body as instrument of cultural expression; muscular coordination	Recognizing and enjoying creative and cultural bodily expressions; accepting limitations of the body	Teach rhythmic sense and timing; serve as a model for cultural bodily expression; allow pupils to move to music and practice a variety of movements
4. Country	Recognizing the contributions of our country to us; realizing there are other countries	Identifying symbols related to the country such as flag, pledge of allegiance, uniforms, patriotic songs	Loving his country; respect for the flag as a symbol of the country	Teach positive concepts about country; develop love for country
5. Music	Interpreting short and long units; knowing there are different forms of music and musical instruments; knowledge of seasonal, patriotic, and folk songs; knowledge of great musicians and composers; understanding of content	Producing sounds; explaining content	Sensing beauty in music; enjoying music	Teach different types of songs and instruments; have children dramatize

SUBJECT	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDINGS	SKILLS	ATTITUDE	IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS
6. Art	Interpreting pictures; interpreting art expressions of others; expressing ideas creatively; interpreting color and other media	Artistic arrangement; ability to manipulate art materials	Indications that art expressions can be fun	Teach and demonstrate different types of art media; teach creative self-expression
7. Literature	Interpreting nursery rhymes and simple verse; engaging in browsing table activities; interpreting content through role playing; reproducing story in sequence	Muscular coordination in handling books; listening	Showing signs of enjoying music	Read to children; have children repeat nursery rhymes for enjoyment
8. Science	Recognizing the contribution of scientists to the world; the beauty and colors of nature; contributions of nature	Identification and labeling of those things which are scientific	Desire to conserve nature's resources	Teach truth versus prejudice, fear, and superstition

III. Development of Wholesome Attitudes

A most important outcome of good early childhood education experiences is the gradual growth of wholesome attitudes. Some attitudes are communicated early. Many attitudes are related to the child's sequence in personality development.

Source of Attitudes

The attitudes of a young child are reflections of others', particularly parents', concepts and feelings about the world around him and the people in it. The child's idea of self is highly related to the expression of others' feelings toward him. It is determined by early experiences with parents, siblings, and others in his environment. Through his relationships with them, he senses acceptance or rejection, approval or disapproval, achievement or failure. Their reactions to him create within him a feeling as to what he is like. The self-concept resulting from these feelings influences greatly the potential for future learnings.

The attitudes of a young child also reflect the influences of his environment. Many of the standards and values of the home and community become a part of the child's reactions to his world.

The attitudes of a young child reflect the influences of other young children. While the peer group provides more intensive pressure at adolescence, the effect of association with other children tends to affect the perspective of the very young. Other children may cause a youngster to learn certain fears. Through competition, a child may become unsure of his own ability to achieve. On the other hand, through others a child may learn cooperation in play activities or learn that he can depend on another for support in an emergency. Thus, a child's attitudes are based on his relations with his home, community, and peer group.

Kindergartens — A Place for Fostering Positive Attitudes

The school, second only to the home in contributing to a child's feelings about himself and his world, has a great opportunity for reinforcing or changing early attitudes.

The kindergarten child is interested in what he can do. The development of initiative and of ways to meet challenging situations is a worthy focus for kindergarten activities. The kindergarten teacher should be vitally concerned with experiences which contribute to feelings of accomplishment, especially where initiative is shown. These feelings are strong determiners of more permanent attitudes. An illustration of this is the giving of responsibility for various room duties. Pupil demonstrations may be used to bring out special interests and strengths. This gives importance to personal achievement.

With careful planning the teacher can assist in developing worthy concepts and vital, individual, functional skills. These result in positive feelings and wholesome attitudes toward (1) self, (2) others, (3) things or objects, and (4) situations.

The Five-Year-Old's Attitude Toward Self as a Basis for Wholesome Attitudes

Trust and self-direction have their roots in the first years of life. These grow from the "self—others" awareness and the sense of being able to manipulate and master aspects of the environment.

The development of self-direction is facilitated or restricted by the degree of freedom exercised on and by the child in the home environment. By the time the child approaches his first organized educational experience, he has become somewhat established (within limits) in his feeling about himself and his particular relationship to the world in which he lives.

The kindergarten should help the child to extend his positive self-concept, or should provide experiences through which he can enhance whatever self-concept he has when he enters kindergarten.

The Five-Year-Old's Interaction with Others as a Basis for Wholesome Attitudes

According to research, the number of interactions in young children's classrooms average over 300 per hour (Anderson). Most of these are responses teachers make. Each of these responses may be a statement, question, or explanation which could indicate approval, praise, assurance, or the opposite for the child. If the child is very young, the influence of these interactions on his self-concept may have great influence on the child's feelings about adults and others. There is much evidence to indicate that the degree of understanding of others is definitely related to one's feelings about one's self.

When a child's self-concept is a healthy one, there is a feeling of kinship with other persons. Since a basic need of every child is a feeling that he belongs to a group, this concept of "others," their rights, their property, and their contribution to his welfare, is a crucial one.

Kindergarten teachers need to be especially careful, then, to plan many individual achievement tasks which five-year-olds can successfully complete. Examples of these tasks are: taking care of clothes, bringing something to share and telling about it, carrying an activity through to completion, etc. In addition, classroom responsibilities involving two or more pupils in joint efforts will tend to fulfill the social needs important at this developmental age. Joint tasks which might fulfill these needs are: taking responsibility for care of the aquarium, bringing the tray at snack time, working to solve a puzzle jointly, or being co-chairman of an activity.

Problems necessitating a solution by two or more pupils may easily be the vehicles for cooperative action and the fostering of cooperative attitudes for five-year-olds. Projects whose construction takes more than one pair of hands may help a child value another's work. Illustrations of tasks which help accomplish these purposes are: arranging a field trip; providing shelter and food for the care of a pet; organizing a clean-up "brigade"; evaluating how a group helped the class.

Interactions with others, then, provide many situations where creative associations may bring about consideration, cooperation, flexibility, and resourcefulness.

The Five-Year-Old's Interaction with Things as a Basis for Wholesome Attitudes

Teachers of five-year-olds work constantly to help children observe, identify, and describe the kind, place, use, and value of objects.

The child's evaluation and successful manipulation of objects within his environment constitute to a large extent his control of that environment. At the same time, he is gaining many satisfactions from the "concreteness" of his experiences. The reflection of success in his achievement reinforces his desire to explore and manipulate further. His achievement is a basis for self-confidence. The assurance engendered by recognition of similar or familiar "object-tasks" tend to establish desirable "feeling-states" (attitudes about these objects).

Some of the experiences which provide interaction with things are: studying materials (cloth, wood, metal, glass, and synthetics); using containers for food (shape, size, and weight); caring for toys and clothes; and manipulating moving objects (tricycles, skates, bicycles, and wagons).

In general, activities which help a five-year-old explore, discover, identify, classify, and evaluate concrete objects within his cultural environment, broaden his background experiences, and contribute to wholesome attitudes.

A Five-Year-Old's Reactions to Situations as a Basis for Wholesome Attitudes

A fourth kind of worthy attitude desired for the five-year-old is one related to his approach to situations which confront him in his world.

Many situations are "feeling-laden" for the five-year-old. The effects of these situations accompany him to school. Disagreements between parents, tardiness in preparing youngsters for school; alcoholism; inadequate food, clothing and shelter; unreasonable restrictions; and parents' irregular work hours are elements in situations many five-year-olds face, yet lack power to alter.

Most of these situations are such that even teachers are limited in what they can do to change them. How can a teacher help a child learn to look objectively at what happens to him? How can she help him overcome fear of a new situation? How can a child learn to view a different situation as a challenge instead of a possible disaster?

Teachers do have the freedom to plan experiences in kinderga which will be happy and satisfying to the child. Teachers do have power to arrange aspects of the classroom environment to offset drab realities of existence for these children. Teachers can know children well enough to individualize their responses so that childre personal feelings can find expression, acceptance, and readjustm when needed. Fairness on the part of the teacher (no matter what ki of background the child has) and delegation of some classroo responsibility which the child can adequately perform, will do much balance earlier ego-deflating experiences. A group project to find o how others feel about what they do to help the kindergartene (janitor, principal, lunchroom manager, bus drivers, and librarian) wi tend to show the child how others approach the work situations i their lives. Dramatic play, especially "play acting" a disturbin problem, may help a child grow in understanding. Some creativ dramatic play may reveal a child's reaction to situations totall unsuspected by the teacher.

If a child can feel secure, accepted, and generally successful in the kindergarten environment, a new situation may not be particularly frightening. If a child feels the joy of group enterprise and has knowledge of group resourcefulness, he may not feel alone when facing new responsibilities. If a child has learned to assume responsibility well, to think creatively, and to project experimentally, he may feel more confident when unexpected emergencies occur.

In conclusion, the kindergarten is a place where satisfying and valuable experiences can be planned for the young child. These experiences are vital in building desirable and constructive attitudes related to self, others, objects, and situations in a five-year-old's world.

CHART III

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CONCEPTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WHOLESOME ATTITUDES

SUBJECT	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDINGS	SKILLS	ATTITUDES	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
1. Self	The child recognizes his uniqueness, his strengths and weaknesses	The child learns to manipulate his body skillfully	The child respects his abilities	Accept each child; individualize some learnings; approve individual achievement; praise the child's progress often
2. Others	Other people are important; the child respects the rights of others	The child learns to cooperate with others	The child is friendly and likes to work with others.	Provide cooperative tasks for two children; in addition, have some larger group experiences; stress worth of accomplishing together. Be firm in stressing rights of the feelings of others about their property. Praise tasks accomplished together.
3. Objects (Things)	Objects have shapes, sizes, weights, colors and uses which can be identified. Some objects are more useful and more valuable than others.	The child can manipulate objects for desired purposes	The child takes pleasure in his ability to manipulate objects.	Plan experiences in which the feel, smell, taste and weight of objects may be identified, classified and discussed. Physical characteristics of objects, and their function and value aspects should be emphasized as the children observe, handle and talk about objects.
4. Situations	Places and people may be new and different. Different situations are not necessarily harmful nor unhappy	The child can adapt to new ideas, new ways of doing, new people, new relationships.	The child is challenged by some of the situations in which he finds himself. He enjoys the adventure in new things; he likes to explore new ideas.	Arrange visits to other parts of the school–later to new places; invite resource people as kindergarten guests (parents with hobbies, a school nurse, the postman); help children enjoy new materials, new procedures; stress the joy of finding out and getting acquainted with something new.

IV. Development of Creative Expression

Introduction

The educational world in which the five-year-old moves, learns, and "has his being" should be approached from a developmental viewpoint. It should consist of an environment rich in possibilities for repeating enjoyable familiar experiences, for exploring intriguing new byways, and for expanding personal relationships. The context should be one which provides continuous stimulations for the eager five-year-old learners. It should give much food for thought by means of rich experiences. These will provide broad bases for later generalizations.

Materials within the kindergarten environment may stimulate a young child to creative action. Large blocks are discovered by the child to be movable, and much pushing and pulling take place to fulfill a child's purpose. Judgments as to size, weight, leverage, and force are learned almost intuitively, while generalizations result and can be applied in creative actions in future situations.

Firsthand experiences with different kinds of measures in the kindergarten context are stimulating. The clock, calendar, yardstick, thermometer, and scales are various ways to measure. A child learns how and why each is used. He is likely to generalize then concerning the overall function of such items and the appropriate use of each. This frees him to be creative in his handling of the concept of measurement.

In order to promote creative approaches to learning tasks and creative expression during and after the accomplishment of such tasks, a kindergarten teacher's aim should be to provide rich developmental experiences consistent with the young child's present growth characteristics and needs.

Approach to a Creative Curriculum

The predominant focus of a kindergarten curriculum relates to those activities on a child's developmental level concerned with man, his world, his arts, recreation, institutions, language, and values.

These concepts are best understood by the child through creative experiences which enhance his self-concept, interpret the actions of others for him, and explore his environment.

Thus, the learnings to be acquired at the kindergarten level are not so much specific information, as the acquisition and development of skills through experiencing stimuli more fully, organizing experiences more systematically, and expressing experiences more precisely. If content is thus the medium through which skills are developed, the concepts must be chosen carefully with consideration for the skill development desired.

A kindergarten child needs to feel secure enough to express himself creatively. It is important, therefore, that he achieve well in learning activities involving (1) self, (2) relations with others, and (3) elements within his environment.

Organizing Activities for Creative Expression

Authorities in early childhood education organize kindergarten content and learnings in different ways. The organization for learning, however, must always relate to the considered objectives of the teacher and society.

The organization of the activities in the kindergarten centers around present developmental needs of the child and ways of solving problems he faces in his daily living. The child may express his needs to use his body in various ways. His persistent love of activity and enjoyment of movement is one hint of a developmental need. His attempts to portray his thoughts and emotions in works may result in poetry, or just apt descriptions such as "she's as skinny as a toothpick." His need for companionship of others may be the reason for his insistence on taking part in a certain group activity. His aggressive behavior may be the kindergarten teacher's only clue to his need for recognition. A kindergartener's withdrawal from activity may tell his teacher how much he needs to express himself and receive approval, encouragement, and understanding.

The kindergarten program should be flexible and creatively adaptable to individual, dual, and small-group activities of various kinds, several of which may take place concurrently.

When a child feels accepted and respected within his school environment, he often demonstrates new ways of thinking, new approaches to the problems besetting him. In his drawings he may indicate in color how he is creatively expressing a difficulty or his solution for it. In song and rhythmic movement he may respond in several creatively unusual ways to his joy and satisfaction with his world. A child's arrangement of blocks or his handling of other manipulative materials may often be an interesting experiment to satisfy an inner urge to create.

Questions a child asks are effective vehicles for providing creative learning experiences. Illustrations of these questions and a teacher's possible use of them to bring about creative expression for the child are as follows:

1. What is it? (attempt at classification)
   Teacher response: "What do you think it could be?"

2. What is it made of? (sensory experiencing)
   Teacher response: "How do you think it feels...smells...tastes, etc...?"

3. What can I do with it? (possibility for creative activity)
   Teacher response: "Let's try and see!"

4. Do I like it? (attitude)
   Teacher response: "Why do you like it?"

5. Do I want it? (need and value)
   Teacher response: "How much does it mean to you?"

If these questions are used to help the child explore his feelings, assess his value system, expand his language, understand his surroundings, and know himself, a teacher is helping a child learn through creative expression.

Many of these activities involving creative expression begin with experiences closest to the child himself: his home, his family, and his community. Many are related to self-awareness, self-achieving, self-knowing aspects of the child's life. Illustrations of such expression are:

1. Seeing how many different ways a child can move across the classroom.
2. Measuring himself in various ways against the abilities of others (jumping, pushing, reaching, doing stunts, etc.).
3. Guessing answers and estimating size, shape, and quantity.
4. Arranging objects in a sequence which a child sees as meaningful.
5. Experimenting with colors, forms, and materials.
6. Determining priorities or sequences (what should be done first, what next. . .and why?).
7. Trying out words and actions to music or percussion instruments.
8. Finding ways of working together and making suggestions to help others.

To encourage creative expression in a five-year-old's educational world, a stimulating contest in the kindergarten itself is necessary. A kindergarten teacher needs to know the age characteristics and personal needs of each child in order to help him develop to the optimum of his creative potential. Creative expressions through communication, quantitative and qualitative thinking, aesthetic experiences, and social living are means of developing the kinds of skills needed in society today.

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CHART IV

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CONEPTS IN DEVELOPMENT OF CREATIVE EXPRESSION

SUBJECT	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDINGS	SKILLS	APPRECIATIONS AND ATTITUDES	IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS
1. Home	Home is a shelter; people live in homes; there are different kinds of homes because people live in different places; a home is made of different materials for different reasons.	The child can recognize different types of homes. He depicts homes artistically.	The child likes his home and wants to take care of it. He appreciates the beauty and comfort of his home.	Provide time for talking about: Home–What is it? What does it mean to have a home? How do we help at home? How can we make a safe home? Provide time for developing skills in drawing homes, singing about homes, observing different kinds of homes, building block shelters, role playing–living at home. Read stories about different homes.
2. Family	A family may have two or more members; families have ties or kinship; each member must do something to help in a family; no one else has the same relations in the family (unique place).	The child is able to dramatize the roles of the different family members.	The child loves his family and enjoys the companionship in the home.	Provide time for talking about: Families–What is a family? What duties we have as members of a family; number of ideas related to family experiences; ways of showing feelings about one's family. Develop skills in counting, drawing pictures related to family life, singing, role playing family life situations. Read stories of families of animals and humans. Project problem situations in family life and have children suggest solutions.
3. Community	Neighbors help each other. They work together to keep the neighborhood clean and safe. There are children of other parents in the neighborhood. They are different ages and can do different kinds of things well. The neighborhood can do more things if it works together. There are many neighborhoods and together they make a community. School is part of the community.	Learn to sign "The More We Get Together." The child can tell something he likes about the neighbors; tell what sort of work some of the neighbors do; show how a neighbor "mows his grass" or "chops his wood"; show what to do when he visits neighbors; show how communities have fun (recreation) together.	The child likes his neighbors. He is willing to share with other children. He is loyal to the people in the neighborhood.	Provide time for children to talk about: What makes a good neighbor? What is a good neighbor? What is a good neighborhood? How does our neighborhood work together? Where is my neighborhood? Provide time for visits from neighborhood and community helpers. Provide time for field trips to places of interest in community. Provide time for practicing skills; singing about neighborhood activities; counting community items; showing some of the community activities (in pantomime or other dramatic activities).

V. Development of Independent Thinking and Problem Solving

One of the goals of the kindergarten, as stated in the Point of View section, is to help children develop the ability to think independently and to solve problems. The kindergarten teacher will plan her program so that children are faced with the need to practice these skills.

When a child thinks independently, he observes the world about him, compares his observations with what he already knows, and draws conclusions based on his observations. One child was believed to be doing some independent thinking about words when he coined a new term for the airport. He knew it was the place where airplanes landed and took off, so he called it the "airplane port." In spite of his erroneous use of words, he showed that he had been thinking independently and had understood what an airport was. Children, faced with a problem situation within their ability to solve, and then left alone, will exhibit their powers for independent thinking.

The teacher has many opportunities to encourage children to solve their own problems. One teacher was watching a child trying to move a wagon which was caught under a table. Instead of helping the child, she said, "I wonder why it won't come out." At that, the child began to look for the reason and finally reported to the teacher that the wheel was caught on the table leg. Next the teacher said, "I wonder what we can do about it." The child looked, straightened the wheel, and moved the wagon. He had solved his own problem with only a little guidance on the part of the teacher. Teachers must be alert for such situations as they arise in the classroom and make use of them to give children the satisfaction of working things out for themselves.

Occasionally teachers feel defeated because children do not respond quickly to their attempts at guidance. Such lack of response may be because children do not understand the words the teacher is using. Instead of repeating her words, the teacher should try to use other words which convey the same idea. An example of this type of problem is that of the child who could not hand his teacher the "umbrella" but responded when she called it a "parasol." Sometimes other children can convey meaning to a child when the teacher has failed. The teacher must be alert to the need to communicate well with children if she is to help them to solve their own problems.

The various learning centers in the classroom (as discussed in the section on room arrangement) will provide children with many opportunities for problem solving. The family life center may promote many individual and group problems which children, with teacher help, can solve. Children may set up a toy grocery store and meet the

problems of buying and selling goods. They may also solve the problems which arise as to how the grocery store will be set up. Other centers will create problems to be solved, too. The music center may elicit the problem of how sound is made and why similar instruments have different sounds. The science center should raise a variety of problems concerning how plants grow, how to care for animals, etc. With teacher help, children can use a scientific approach to solving these problems.

In order to help children solve problems which arise daily, the teacher should be thoroughly familiar with the scientific process. Then she will help children use this process as they solve their problems. The basic steps which will be followed are:

1. stating the problem clearly
2. observing to find information
3. suggesting possible solutions to the problem
4. testing the solution
5. gathering further information if needed
6. retesting
7. arriving at a solution which should bring up more problems.

The previously quoted situation of the child's attempt to remove the wagon may be analyzed for its use of the scientific process. First, the teacher helped the child to discover and put into words just what his problem was. Then he looked for information to help solve the problem, suggested a solution, tested his solution, and found that it worked. In this particular case, it was not necessary for him to look for further information since his first solution was successful. Through skillful questioning, the teacher can turn many everyday situations into real opportunities for independent thinking and problem solving. The teacher also must be wise in knowing when to step into a situation and when to allow children to work things out for themselves. In general, the teacher will want to enter a situation with a helpful statement or question before the children become too frustrated to want to continue working on the problem. The teacher who knows her children will soon learn to recognize this moment.

The teacher must be alert to group situations in which she can promote problem solving as well as situations in which individuals are involved. One teacher took a small group of five-year-olds on a walk to look for insects. They brought some caterpillars back to the classroom in a jar of dirt. They were then encouraged to find out about the caterpillars by looking for pictures of them in a book on insects provided by the teacher. The teacher read to the children some of the information in the book. Through listening, comparing, and discussing, the group of children was able to clarify their questions and find answers to most of them. The teacher had planned this activity in such a way as to promote independent thinking and problem solving by this group of children.

Not every situation will proceed as smoothly as those mentioned above. A failure, however, need not be a tragedy. Human beings tend to learn from their mistakes at least as effectively as they learn from their successes. Children need the freedom to make mistakes. Those mistakes need to be accepted as learning situations. A child who makes a mistake should be helped to see what went wrong and why. One child in a kindergarten was trying to fit pegs of different shapes into the proper-sized holes in a board. By trying the pegs in different holes until she found the correct one, she was able to place all the pegs correctly. She then removed them and proceeded to replace them. Her second attempt was completed in much less time than her first. She had learned from her mistakes. This type of learning has definite value in the kindergarten. The teacher must not be too quick to tell the child the correct answer, but should allow freedom to discover it through mistakes and be ready to give help when needed.

A good kindergarten environment is filled with opportunity for children to solve many problems. The teacher plans some problems. Others arise out of the situations which develop normally in the course of the day. The teacher is alert to take advantage of these. She knows that children can solve many of their own problems if given a chance to do so. Therefore, the wise teacher gives only the necessary amount of guidance, and thus allows children to do what they can on their own. The kindergarten becomes a problem-solving laboratory for the problems encountered in everyday living with a group of five-year-olds.

35
WAIT FOR GREEN LIGHT
STOP
NO U TURN

CHART V

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CONCEPTS IN DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENT THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

SUBJECT	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDINGS	SKILLS	ATTITUDES	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
1. Use of the body	Understand the use of his body in space (movement).	Coordination of muscles; balance; rhythm; using the body in a variety of ways.	Friendly relationship with others in the use of space; acceptance of self in space.	Teach children play which involves space. Teach play which involves balance. Teach play which involves rhythms. Teach play which involves coordination. Use recordings which have been made for use in rhythms and coordination. Each child gets in position for arms' length space. He is given a rope or a hoop and asked to make up a game with one rule. He demonstrates the game and states his rule.
2. Relationships with others	Altercations; solutions of problems which occur between two children.	Identify problem situation. Distinguish between fact and opinion.	Acceptance of decision based upon common understanding.	
3. Relationship of material things	One-to-one correspondence; grouping and regrouping.	Observe relationships. Develop vocabulary to talk about relationships.		Do we have as many tables as chairs? Do we have as many chairs as boys? girls? boys and girls? Have all boys stand in a group. Have those wearing black shoes step forward. Do one-to-one correspondence between all boys and those with black shoes. Do we have more than or less than with either group?

SUBJECT	KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDINGS	SKILLS	ATTITUDES	IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHER
4. Understanding situations	Understanding that a person who does useful work is a producer. People who make useful things are producers of *goods*. People who do not make things, but who do useful work for others, are producers of *services*.	Analyze the situation. Learn to listen. Learn to observe carefully. Learn appropriate vocabulary.	Recognize that people feel good when they can do useful work (sense of satisfaction). Useful work is appreciated. Gain self-respect for trying to make the world a better place in which to live.	To aid the children in discovering what constitues useful work, they may play a game in which the teacher describes a variety of activities. The children respond by telling whether such activities are useful. Among activities that could *not* be counted useful, the teacher could include a boy shoveling snow *onto* the sidewalk, a girl watering the lawn on a rainy day, a man making a boat in the middle of the desert. So that children will identify members of the family as producers, they can draw pictures of something that their mothers, fathers, and they themselves produce at home. To help children distinguish between the producers of goods and services *at home*, the teacher cuts pictures from magazines. The pictures may be divided into piles containing producers of goods and of services. Drawing from producers-of-goods pile, the teacher may hold up one picture at a time, asking: What is this person producing? Is this person producing a useful thing? Why is it useful? The above may be done for producers of services.

Note: All of this situation material is taken from *Our Working World, Families at Work* by Lawrence Senesh, Science Research Associates, Inc. Chicago.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

The equipment and materials of the kindergarten will help to determine the kind of program which takes place. Since the program planned by the teacher is the heart of the kindergarten, she must have tools with which to work. Therefore, it is necessary that the kindergarten be provided with materials and equipment which can arouse the child's innate curiosity and stimulate sequential development in self-awareness, motor skills, communication, cognitive ability, and social skills. Some materials are commercially prepared while others can be made from discarded items from homes or businesses in the community.

Considerations for Selecting Equipment and Materials:

1. Materials and equipment should be selected for the purpose of enriching and carrying out the goals of the program.

2. Equipment and materials should be sturdy, functional, and able to take the handling of many youngsters.

3. When practical, materials and equipment should be selected which can serve multiple purposes.

4. Equipment and materials should be suited in size and design to the age and maturity of the children who will be using them.

5. Equipment and materials should be easily cleaned, in good repair, painted with nonpoisonous paint and noninflammable.

6. Whenever possible, parents should be utilized and children should be encouraged to create and/or provide materials.

7. Use should be made of discarded, inexpensive, familiar and easily available materials.

8. Materials and equipment should be safe and sanitary.

9. Adequate storage space should be available.

Good materials cost more at the time of the initial purchase, but will last longer because of their durability. Sometimes prices may differ on materials of similar quality. Those responsible for purchasing materials must be alert to getting the best possible material for the lowest possible cost.

Books are such an important part of the kindergarten that in selecting them great care should be used. Some criteria for use in selecting books are:

1. They should have a sturdy library binding.
2. Illustrations should be clear and pleasing and should help to tell the story.
3. There should be some stories which are realistic and help to extend the child's understanding of his world.
4. There should be a variety of books to meet the interests and needs of each child.
5. Many of the children's classics should be included in the books obtained for the kindergarten.

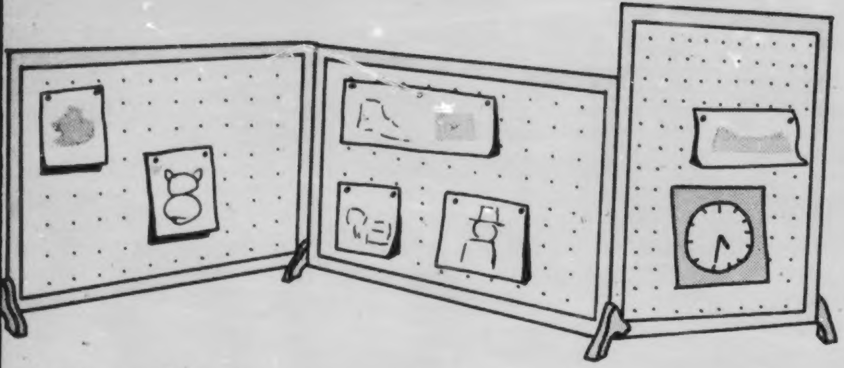
While it is necessary to have several books housed permanently in the kindergarten classroom, provision should be made for the teacher and students to participate fully in the regular school library program. "Want Lists" of books needed for the program should be developed cooperatively by the teacher and librarian. These should be centrally purchased and circulated.

Often teachers have access to a public library. Many libraries allow teachers to check out a substantial number of books and to keep them for longer than the normal period of time. Such an arrangement can add greatly to the books available for the kindergarten.

In making both library and classroom books available, not all the books need to be displayed at any one time. Books should be changed frequently so that children do not tire of them and have a broader selection.

Obtaining Materials

While much of the kindergarten equipment must be purchased, some of it can be made or improvised from the materials at hand. Scrap pieces of lumber can be sanded and finished for use as blocks. An old car on the playground provides many hours of creative dramatic play. Stoves and sinks for the housekeeping corner may be made of boxes which are painted. Swings may be made from old tires. The creative teacher will not despair because there is not enough money to purchase all the desired equipment. Instead, she will use her ingenuity to improvise.



Centers of Interest

There should be various centers of interest in the classroom to provide stimulation for the children. These centers of interest should be so placed that their purpose is obvious to children and natural space limitations are observed. The room arrangement may provide for this. Many classrooms have portable screens which can help to define an area. These screens may also be used to give a child some privacy at rest time. Sometimes, book shelves may be put on rollers so that they can help to divide the room into working areas. When placed on rollers, they can be easily moved if a larger area is needed for some activity.

A suggested list of materials and equipment for the various centers of interest follows. The list is by no means complete. Reference to use in selection of materials and equipment may be found in the bibliography at the end of this section. See pages 65, 66, and 67.

Equipment and Materials Needed for a Kindergarten with an Enrollment of 20

For selection of materials for purchase, consult bulletins or equipment supply catalogues that specialize in kindergarten materials.

ART:

Aprons, 6 - or old shirts
Brushes, 12" handles
Clay, premoistened, 50 lbs.
Containers for paint, glass & tin
Crayons, jumbo, mixed colors, 2 doz.
Easels, double, adjustable paint trays with holes for jars, 2
Paint, finger, 3 pts. ea., red, yellow, green, blue, brown, black
Paint, powdered tempera, 5 lbs. ea., white, violet, orange, brown; 7 lbs. ea., yellow, blue, red, black, green, magenta, turquoise; 2 lbs. ea., gold, silver

ART (Continued)

Paper, butcher, 2 rolls, white and brown with cutting holders
Paper, finger painting, 3 pkgs., 16" x 22", or glazed shelf paper
Paper, poster, 3 pkgs., 18" x 24", asst'd. colors
Paper, unprinted news, 4 reams 18" x 24" and 24" x 36", 32 lbs. to ream
Paste, 4 qts.
Pipe cleaners, multicolored and white, 1 box
Scissors, adult, 2 pr.
Scissors, blunt, 1 doz.
Scissors, left-handed, 3
Sponges, 1 doz
String, 2 balls
Scraps for collage

MUSIC:

Piano, autoharp or pitch pipe
Record player with adapter and earphones, records
Rhythm instruments
Tape recorder with adapter and earphones
Blank and commercial tapes
True-tone bars (series of 8 notes)

SCIENCE:

Animal cages
Aquarium
Bird feeder
Board mounted with keys, locks
Box of sensory materials - sound, fragrance, texture, weight
Clock
Compass (simple)
Insects and insect cage, cocoons
Terrarium
Leaves

SCIENCE (Continued)

Magnets, 2 bar and 2 horseshoe
Magnifying glass, hand and tripod
Plants
Pulleys of various sizes
Scales and weights - including metric
Seeds
Collections, shells, rocks, seeds, etc.
Thermometer, indoor and outdoor
Tuning fork
Wire, electric bulb and batteries

FAMILY LIFE:

Adult size dishpans
Chest of drawers
Doll bed, doll carriage
Dolls and doll clothes
Full-length mirror
Ironing board and iron
Kitchen appliances
Small broom, dustpan, and mop
Table and chairs, dishes
Telephone

BLOCK PLAY:

Boards, cleated, 6
Boards, plain, 12 maximum 6'
Building blocks, solid for dramatic play, 1 set unit type (about 500 blocks), straight, circular and arched
Crane
Hollow blocks, unit, 12
Hollow blocks, quadruped unit, 6
Trucks, cars, airplanes, boats

LIBRARY-AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT

Books - a minimum of 5 per child, preferably more
Filmstrips
Flannel board and materials
Listening center
Cassettes and tapes
Maps - state and city
Pictures - to coordinate with units of study, holiday, etc.
Simple globe
Viewmaster and films

MATHEMATICS:

Cusinaire rods
Geo-boards and bands
Kinesthetic numbers - individual
Kinesthetic numbers - in order
Matching games (color, shape, size, and number sets, 6-10)
Number poster boards (for display)
Pegboards and pegs
Property blocks (geometric solids)
Scale and weights - including metric
Uniflex blocks and inset number board
Dominoes (large and small)

LANGUAGE ARTS:

Letters, tactile
Typewriter
Chalkboards
Magic slates
Games for classification such as color, size and shape recognition sequence
Pictures and objects for classifying
Puppets and puppet theater

COOKING:

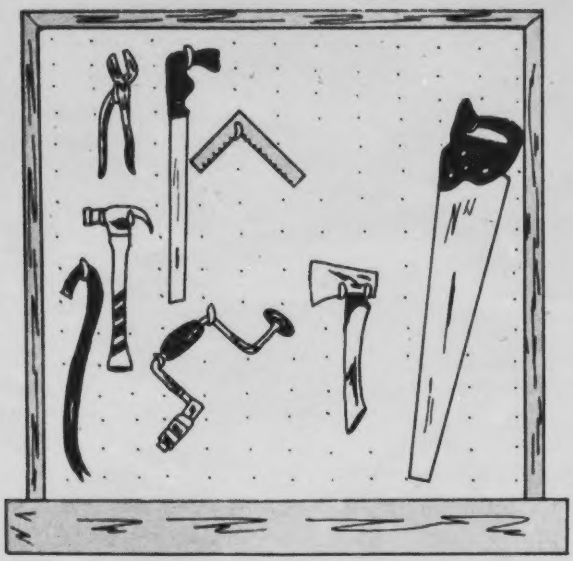
Measuring spoons and cups
Mixing bowl of varying sizes
Egg beater
Cookie cutters
Minute timer
Paring knives
Pots and pans
Serving trays
Silverware
Baking sheets
Stove or hot plate
Dishpan
Dish cloths and dish towels

OUTDOOR PLAY:

Balls (8" to 24")
Boards with cleats
Climbing apparatus
Garden tools
Old car
Jump ropes - long and individual
Pieces of sewer pipe (large enough for a child to crawl through)
Sandbox with sand toys (needs a fitted cover)
Low balance beams
Sanded boards, 5' to 6'
Sawhorses
Set of steps with platform
Small ladder
Tricycles, 2
Wagons, 2
Wheelbarrow
Wooden packing boxes
Tires - tractor, automobile, etc.
Tree trunks

WATER PLAY:

Bottles, plastic
Buckets
Funnels, assorted sizes
Laundry tubs or water tables



WATER PLAY (Continued)

Tubes and siphoning apparatus
Plastic aprons
Measuring containers, including metric

WOODWORKING:

Assorted-sized screws, bolts
Brace and bit
Clamps
Hammers (light adult size)

WOODWORKING (Continued)

Handsaws
Nails, assorted sizes
One-foot ruler
Pliers
Sandpaper
Scraps of soft wood
Screwdriver
Sturdy workbench
Vise

MANIPULATIVES:

Large Muscle

Blocks (hardwood primary set)
Closed hollow blocks (large size, hardwood or plastic)
Farm Animals (hardwood or plastic)
People (hardwood or plastic)
Rocking boat
Trucks (large riding, and medium size)
Transportation toys (cars, boats, airplanes, trains, medium size)

Small Muscle

Dressing squares
Hardwood nesting blocks
Lacing beads (large and small beads)
Lacing cards
Puzzles (varying degrees of difficulty)
Tinker toys
Table games (12 different types of building and putting together games)

ROOM ARRANGEMENT

Room Arrangement and Kindergarten Goals

The learning environment is created by persons using the physical resources of buildings, space allocations, arrangements of furnishings, and equipment to accomplish the specific goals of the kindergarten program. There are many ways by which the room arrangement contributes to the achievement of kindergarten goals. The development of a positive self-image can be furthered by the arrangement of equipment and materials which helps the child feel competent in their use. Furniture designed in scale appropriate to the developmental needs of the child contributes to his feelings of adequacy in the environment. The child's self-identity as an individual of significance in the group is encouraged by the designation of some individual space such as lockers, or hooks for clothing with personal identification marks. Many other room arrangement aspects of the learning environment will likewise contribute to the goals of the kindergarten presented in the Point of View section of this bulletin.

Learning experiences in all areas of the curriculum are enhanced by the arrangement of available furnishings and equipment to provide a functional, attractive, and flexible environment. For example, the development of habitual behavior patterns of cleanliness and orderliness may be furthered by the arrangement of shelf spaces at heights easily reached by five-year-olds. Provision of usable storage may also contribute to feelings of respect for property which is shared with others. The general layout of material and equipment will encourage or deter the child's freedom to engage in creative expression. The skillful application of basic principles of color and design in walls, floors, and furnishings in the room will encourage the development of deep appreciation of aesthetic values in one's surroundings. The arrangement of table settings and chairs for the mid-morning snack can make possible the kind of interaction which develops appreciation for others and social skills needed in everyday living. In brief, physical facilities meeting recognized standards, arranged and used creatively, provide a learning environment mutually valuable to teachers and children. (For standards for physical facilities see the section on Administration.)

Suggested Guides for Room Arrangements

Some basic guides which may be applied in providing room arrangements to facilitate goals and learning experiences are summarized in the following statements:

1. The arrangement of equipment, furniture, and furnishings should be related to the developmental needs and interests of kindergarten-age children.

2. Room arrangement should encourage effective interpersonal relationships.

3. Arrangement of equipment and furnishings should be flexible and modifiable for achieving the immediate and the more long-range goals of learning.

4. The selection and use of color and design in furniture, furnishings, and wall and floor backgrounds should reflect artistic principles which promote the development of appreciation and enjoyment of beauty in one's surroundings.

5. The arrangement and use of furniture, equipment, and furnishings should contribute to maintaining health and safety of individuals and groups.

6. Arrangement of furniture, furnishings, equipment and supplies should promote habits of orderliness essential to maintaining aesthetic appearance and effective managerial practices.

7. Groupings of furniture and equipment should permit adequate visual perception of the various areas by the children and adults in the classroom.

8. Effective use of equipment, furnishings, and teaching materials will be promoted by arrangement into functional centers of interest based on purposeful experiences to be carried out in the designated area.

Suggested Areas for Room Arrangement

Decisions about room arrangement in specific situations must be related to space and facilities available for the program to be developed. The use of centers of interest, area units, or interest areas as the organizational principle for planning the layout of the rooms will permit functional arrangements keyed to the purposes of the curriculum. When space is limited, the use of dual- or multiple-purpose centers may contribute to a flexible schedule. Portable screens or other equipment may serve as dividers to readily create these centers. Leaving some floor space free is essential for activities such as storytelling or games for seated groups. A large rug may be placed to define those areas. There should be flexibility in the use of both space and equipment. Centers should be changed from time to time to foster the development of new interest concepts and skills. At times centers or parts of centers may be combined for specific purposes. Therefore, the number of centers will vary from time to time and from room to room. Flexibility of both space and equipment will provide a more purposeful and stimulating environment for young children.

The centers generally needed to accomplish the goals of the typical kindergarten program are listed below. These centers give opportunities for various learning experiences. Some kindergarten rooms may not include each of these separate areas.

1. Art Center––Equipment and supplies are grouped in this area to encourage creative activities using a wide variety of art media. Eye-level exhibit space on walls may be provided in this area as well as in other parts of the room.

2. Library Center––This area should be in a quiet section of the room with adequate lighting. It should have child-size chairs, cushions, and a rug so that children may be comfortable while enjoying books. Books should be displayed attractively, changed frequently, and should reflect the best available in children's literature.

   Audiovisual materials such as viewers, filmstrips and projectors, tape recorders, and cassettes with earphones could be placed in this area, or they could be placed in a separate center.

3. Music Center––This center would include groupings of furniture and equipment for listening and performing on various instruments and participating in group singing. A piano may be used as a divider with other instruments arranged nearby.

4. Family Life Centers––Creative make-believe activities occur in this area where small-scale household furniture is arranged. Dolls and other equipment stimulate free creative expression and the development of the ability to communicate successfully with others.

   Actual food preparation and cooking activities would provide additional learning experiences. This will require adult supervision.

5. **Social Activities Center**——In this area equipment and materials for active, manipulative games are arranged to encourage group activities. If space permits, some large equipment may be placed in this area.

6. **Block Construction Center**——Blocks of various sizes are used here to encourage manipulatory activities valuable for developing social understandings, abilities, and other goals of learning.

7. **Woodworking Center**——This area is used for simple construction activities using wood or other materials. It may be located in a room adjacent to the main kindergarten room if space is limited. Adequate storage for tools is important.

8. **Science**——Tables and shelves including display areas are provided here for equipment such as an aquarium, cages for pets, and other items needed to encourage the child to observe, explore, and experiment.

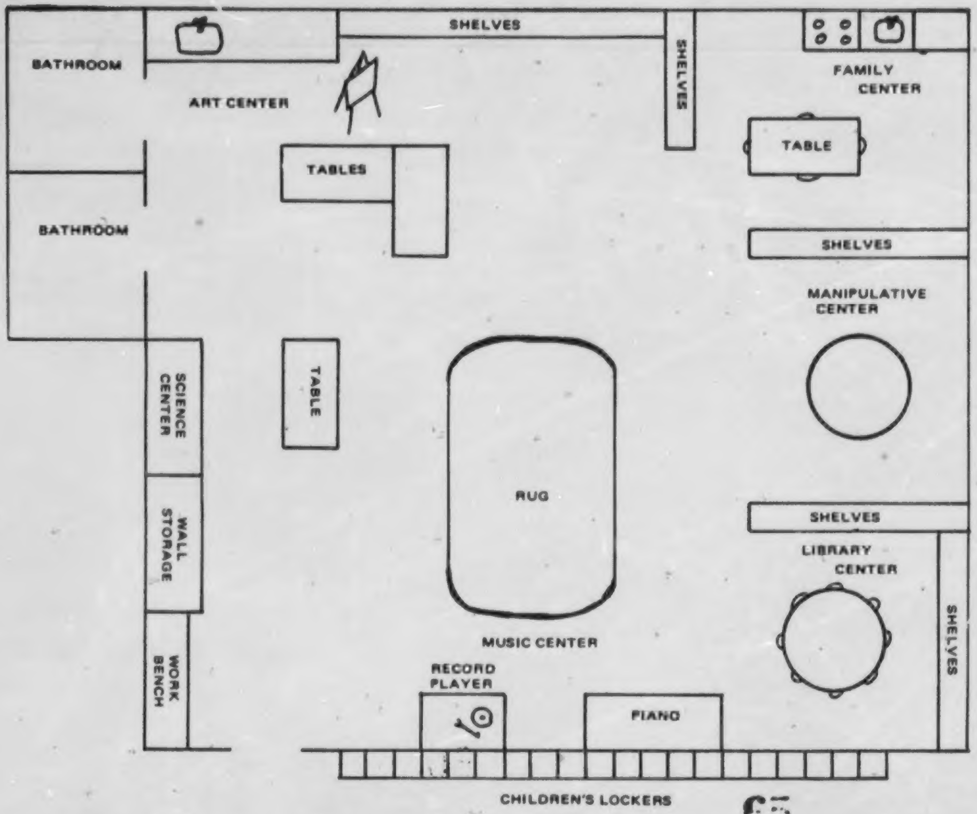
9. **Manipulative Materials Center**——In this area manipulative materials are used by individuals and small groups. It may include puzzles, dominoes, checkers, flannel boards with cutouts, and commercial and teacher-made games. The activities should be selected for their value in developing cognitive and psychomotor skills.

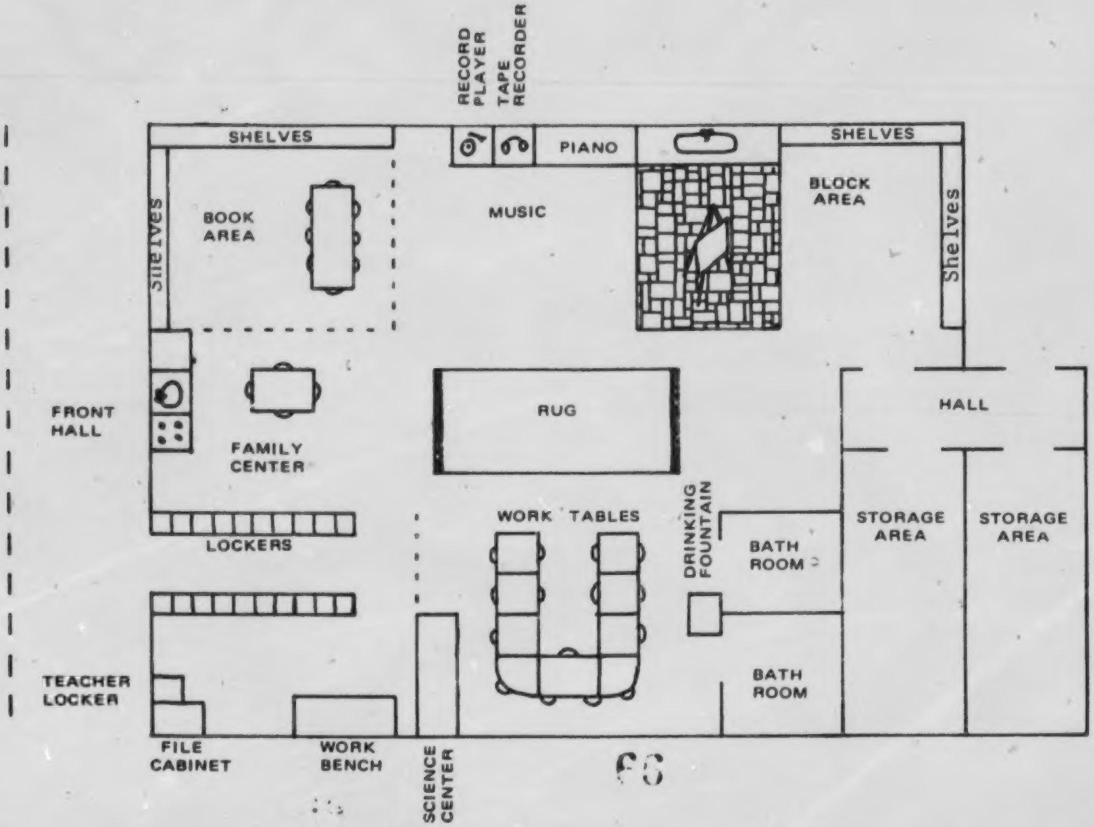
10. **Quiet Center**——At least one quiet area should be provided for a child who needs time to himself away from the group. This should be a cozy nook where a child can go to be alone with a book, a doll, or just to think. This could contain a rug, pillows, or a rocking chair, possibly separated from the room by a screen or a drape of material.

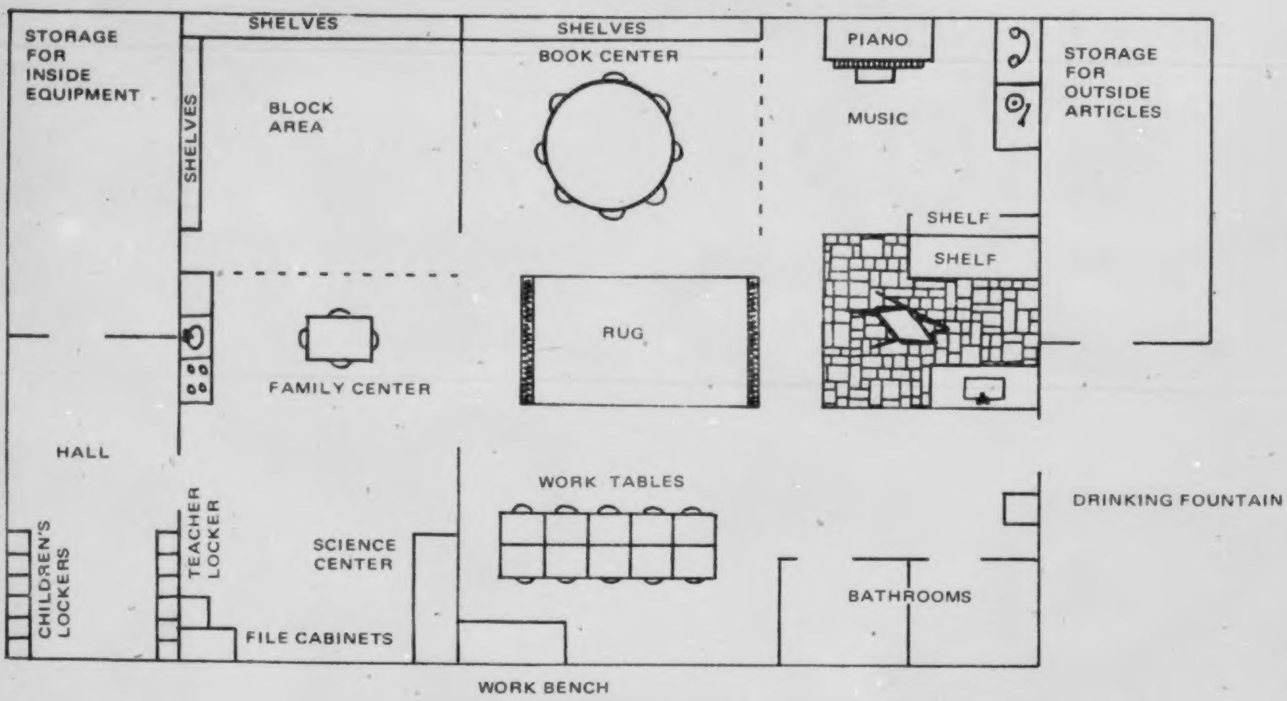
11. **Outdoor Center**——Outdoor areas should be an extension of the classroom learning environment. They should be readily accessible so that movement from indoors to outdoors can be spontaneous, while still providing easy supervision by the teachers. The outdoor areas should be designed as a continuous playscape rather than as a collection of isolated objects.

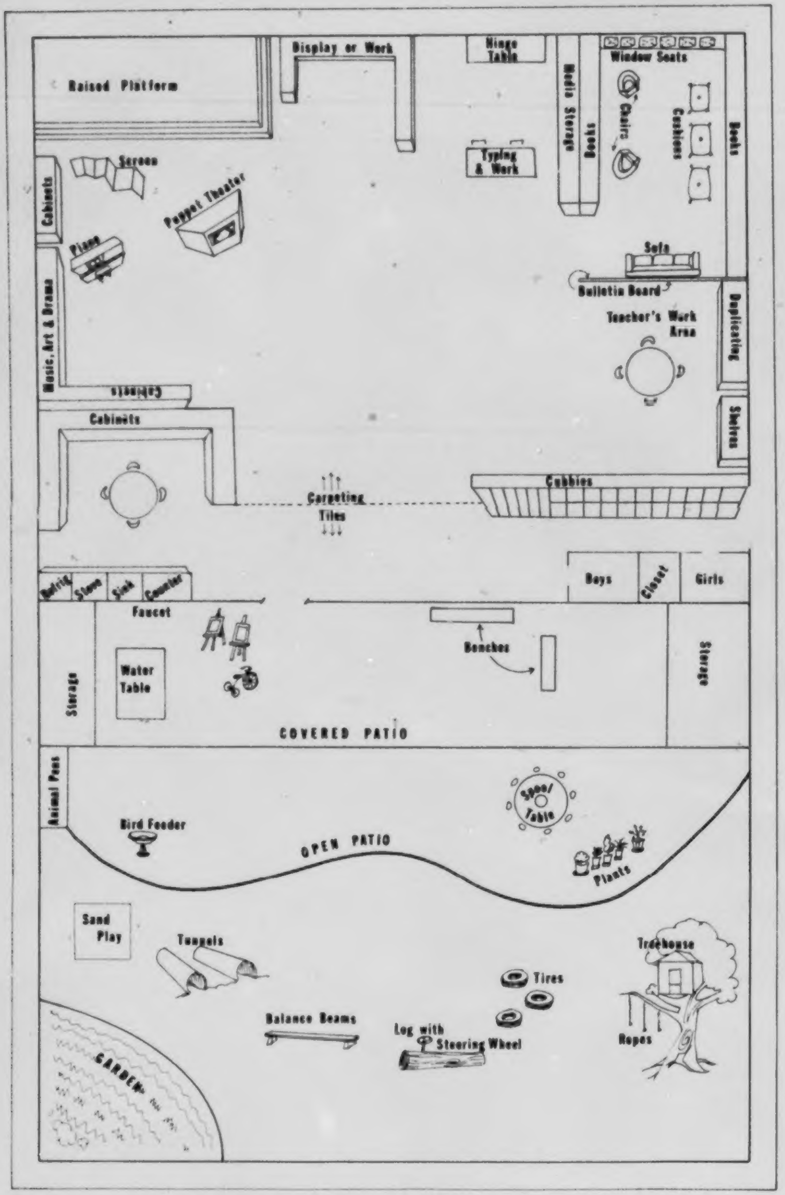
SUMMARY

Room arrangements contribute to the achievement of kindergarten goals when teachers and children use them creatively in learning experiences. Thoughtful planning is essential to creating an attractive, flexible, and safe learning environment. Functional groupings of furnishings and equipment into areas or centers according to learning experiences planned is desirable. These recommendations should be considered in relation to the limitations and opportunities in the specific kindergarten program.


BATHROOM
ART CENTER
SHELVES
SHELVES
FAMILY CENTER
TABLES
TABLE
BATHROOM
SHELVES
MANIPULATIVE CENTER
SCIENCE CENTER
TABLE
RUG
WALL STORAGE
SHELVES
LIBRARY CENTER
SHELVES
MUSIC CENTER
WORK BENCH
RECORD PLAYER
PIANO
CHILDREN'S LOCKERS


RECORD PLAYER
TAPE RECORDER
SHELVES
PIANO
SHELVES
Shelves
BOOK AREA
MUSIC
BLOCK AREA
Shelves
FRONT HALL
FAMILY CENTER
RUG
HALL
DRINKING FOUNTAIN
WORK TABLES
LOCKERS
BATH ROOM
STORAGE AREA
STORAGE AREA
TEACHER LOCKER
BATH ROOM
FILE CABINET
WORK BENCH
SCIENCE CENTER


STORAGE FOR INSIDE EQUIPMENT
SHELVES
SHELVES
BOOK CENTER
PIANO
STORAGE FOR OUTSIDE ARTICLES
SHELVES
BLOCK AREA
MUSIC
SHELF
SHELF
RUG
FAMILY CENTER
HALL
WORK TABLES
DRINKING FOUNTAIN
CHILDREN'S LOCKERS
TEACHER LOCKER
SCIENCE CENTER
BATHROOMS
FILE CABINETS
WORK BENCH


Raised Platform
Display or Work
Hinge Table
Media Storage
Books
Window Seats
Chairs
Cushions
Books
Screen
Cabinets
Puppet Theater
Piano
Typing & Work
Sofa
Bulletin Board
Teacher's Work Area
Duplicating
Music, Art & Drama
Cabinets
Cabinets
Shelves
Cubbies
Carpeting
Tiles
Refrig
Stove
Sink
Counter
Faucet
Boys
Closet
Girls
Storage
Water Table
Benches
Storage
COVERED PATIO
Animal Pens
Bird Feeder
Spool Table
OPEN PATIO
Plants
Sand Play
Tunnels
Treehouse
Tires
Balance Beams
Log with Steering Wheel
Ropes
GARDEN

A TYPICAL DAY

In planning to meet the individual differences in any group of five-year-olds, a kindergarten daily program should be flexible, varied, and adapted to the need of the particular group.

While certain behaviors such as care of wraps, toileting, handwashing, and safety procedures may be routinized, there should be much time for individual experimentation and cooperative endeavor.

No subjects are required in the kindergarten. This does not mean that learning in the form of experiences is not carefully planned for specific outcomes. It does mean that activities may encompass several learnings at one time for the young child. It implies also that a child's learning is selective in the sense that his past experiencing may forecast what he learns from present situations.

A creative approach appears to be most fruitful in working with young children. Young children are creative and can be encouraged to develop in creativity (Torrance, 1969). It is important, therefore, that learning experiences take advantage of this natural creative "readiness."

Since a feeling of security in the kindergarten environment is desirable early, some educational routines are begun as soon as possible.

Upon arrival at school each day a child should receive some form of pleasant recognition. He should be aware of a place which is particularly his own. This may be a locker for wraps, or as a minimum, merely a hook with his name printed above it and a space where he may keep a box with some of his smaller possessions. If desks are provided for kindergarten children, each child's desk should have his name on it.

This will not only help him to associate symbols with meaning but will contribute to his self-identification.

After wraps (coats, caps, etc.) are removed, some freedom of choice follows as to how he orients himself to the classroom environment and other children for the beginning of the day. He may want to talk with other children, explore new articles arranged to attract interest, look at picture books, or work with puzzles.

At a signal from the teacher (raised hand, note on piano, or movement such as teacher bringing a chair to a certain spot) the children gather as a total group for beginning experiences.

Other events for the day are fitted appropriately to the needs of the group in this particular kindergarten. Learning experiences and activities found to be generally satisfying with five-year-olds organize themselves around certain developmental considerations such as large-muscle movements (free play), creative communication, fine arts skills, nature explorations, storytelling, dramatization activities, problem solving, and concrete, manipulative, construction-type projects.

Some Criteria for Planning the Daily Schedule Are:

1. The schedule should be based on needs and interests of the group and the individual child, and the resources available.

2. It should be flexible enough to allow creativity but fixed enough to provide continuity, breadth of interests, and the development of feelings of security.

3. It should include time for individual and group activities both indoors and outdoors.

4. It should alternate periods of active and quiet experiences.

5. It should be organized into relatively short time periods for variety and recognition of needs of five-year-olds. (Span of concentration, need for activity, etc.)

Suggested daily plans are given below.

PLAN I

60 minutes – Arrival, put away wraps, individual or small-group activity in the various interest centers of the room. Clean-up.

20 minutes – Group activity. Music, story, rhythms, or creative dramatics.

30 minutes – Toileting, handwashing, snack time, and clean-up.

40 minutes – Outdoor play.

60 minutes – Interest period. Work on projects of individual or small-group interest.

45 minutes – Prepare for and eat lunch.

60 minutes – Rest on cots.

30 minutes – Story. Evaluation of day. Free activities until time for departure.

PLAN II

60 minutes – Arrival, outdoor play.

45 minutes – Toileting. Group activities (music, story), snack time.

60 minutes – Individual and small-group activities.

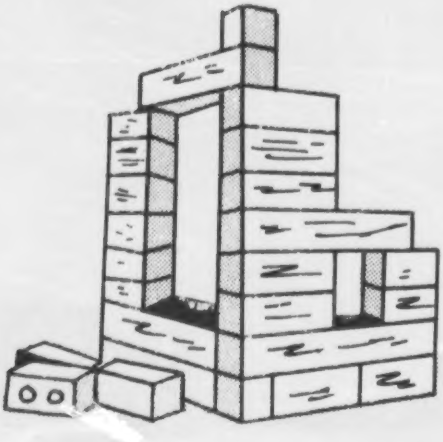
45 minutes – Lunch routines.

60 minutes – Rest on cots.

60 minutes – Outdoor play until time for departure.

SUMMARY

This section has attempted to provide the kindergarten teacher with ideas and suggestions for use in planning the kindergarten program. Since the program should be well organized, but highly flexible, it is not possible to detail a program for a particular school. The responsibility must rest with the well-trained teacher. However, it is hoped that the suggestions and ideas given here will serve as a guide in helping the teacher to organize her own program.



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Meadow Gold

Parent Involvement

CONCEPTS OF PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent involvement is the parents' sharing of interests, abilities, and special talents with principals, teachers, and children in working toward the goals of the kindergarten program. This involvement begins with a point of view which is expressed in many ways. It is an attitude of active concern for the child and his growth toward human effectiveness in a democratic society. It is a feeling of responsibility shared by parents, principals, and teachers as they try to provide the best learning experiences for the child in the home, the school, and the community. It is a friendly concern for each other's efforts to be good parents and good teachers. It is also an awareness of common and individual responsibilities for the child's education.

Parent involvement means more than occasional school visits; however, its scope will be determined primarily by three factors. First, the understanding and appreciation of its value on the part of administrators, teachers, and parents will influence the degree of participation. When there is a strong belief in the need for parent involvement, plans will be made for participation. The school staff should not be discouraged if parent involvement develops slowly. A second factor concerns the interests, abilities, available time, and energy of parents. Special attention should be given to discovering the specific abilities of parents with different kinds of backgrounds. The needs of a particular kindergarten and school make a third factor influencing the extent of parent involvement. Teachers will not relinquish their responsibility as teachers, but will seek all resources available to enrich and extend the learning experiences of the child.

The home and family group continue today as the setting for the child's initial learnings in the process of human development. Parents are the child's first teachers and as such exert a profound influence during the formative years. As the child moves from the family into extended environment of play groups and the organized school program, his parents should continue to contribute to his learning and development. They may provide home experiences to supplement, enrich, and reinforce learning begun in the kindergarten when they are intelligently involved in the program. Likewise, the teachers who understand parents through cooperative working relationships may extend at school the learnings initiated by parents in the home. Effective parent involvement helps the teacher to see the child in the perspective of home and family influence on his behavior and attitudes. Through contact with parents in various situations, the teacher will not only understand the child more adequately, but she may also identify needs and strengths of parents which can be used as a basis for planning programs for parent meetings and/or study groups.

The quality of home-school relationships at the initial stages of the public education program will influence the parents in the succeeding years of the child's education. When parents learn about kindergarten through direct participation, they can justify their faith and trust in education with concrete evidence. Effective home-school relations at the kindergarten level should contribute a lasting influence on the parents' interest and subsequent involvement in the school program.

SOME COMMON CONCERNS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS

The entrance of a child into kindergarten is usually his first experience in organized education away from his parents. As he is placed in the care of new and, to him, strange individuals, most parents are concerned for his safety, health, and welfare. This concern should be shared by the teacher even though she cannot be as anxious about each child as the parents should be. The teacher who understands this situation can do much to relieve the anxieties of parents during the beginning weeks of kindergarten. Every effort should be made to provide a safe, comfortable, and happy environment for the child as responsibility is transferred from parent to teacher for the school day.

Parents and teachers should be concerned about how the child will react to other children in the group. The kindergarten should offer many opportunities for the child to develop in social experiences and group behavior. As the teacher observes the child's development, she will be able to lead him in developing independence in some situations, and interdependence in others. Parents can be helped in observing his development so that they can guide the child more effectively in the home.

An integral part of the child's progress in growth and development is his feeling of security and sense of belonging. By the age of five a child may have developed strong feelings of insecurity. The teacher should work closely with the parents to overcome inadequacy in this area and to provide opportunities for the child to experience success, thus improving his self-image. Parents can assist more adequately if they can observe the child at school and discuss his attitude with the teacher or other professional persons in the kindergarten program. It is urgent that the teacher understand the home background of the child in her efforts to help him develop a more positive self-concept.

HOME ENVIRONMENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE CHILD AND PARENT PARTICIPATION

Each child entering kindergarten brings the influence of his family upon his attitudes, behaviors, and physical development. These influences may be recognized in the child's speech, mannerisms, social customs, and ways of relating himself to others. Kindergarten teachers will need information about the child's family in order to be sensitive to influences which carry over into the classroom. Such information will aid the teacher in understanding what may be expected of parents as participants in the program.

In addition to basic information about the family of each kindergarten child, some knowledge of home and family life conditions in our society today will aid the teacher in working with parents and children. Some of the important conditions to be recognized are:

1. Many mothers with children under the age of six years are working full-time or part-time outside the home today. This fact places limitations on the school participation program of such parents. This factor may also limit the time and influence the kind of attention the mother can give to the child at home. The kindergarten teacher's understanding of this situation may enable her to meet some of the child's needs not provided for by the family.

2. The one-parent family resulting from divorce, desertion, separation, or death of one spouse affects many children in our society today. Tensions created by these situations may be manifested in the child's behavior from time to time. The teacher should not be constantly looking for differences in children from such situations since many of them are well adjusted and secure in the school environment. Understanding some of the problems of the one-parent family helps the teacher to be sensitive to ways she may assist the parent in guiding the child's adjustment to family crises.

3. In relation to the family life cycle, kindergarten children are usually from comparatively young families. Young parents are often involved with pressures of busy schedules in home and community activities. They may also experience financial strains in providing desired standards of living for a growing family. Young mothers may be tied down with home responsibilities which limit their time for outside activities. When they visit the kindergarten or attend school meetings it may be necessary to bring an infant or small child along. Many such factors will influence the young parents' interest and ways of participating in the kindergarten program.

4. Family routines of eating, sleeping, personal care, recreation, and other home life activities vary according to socioeconomic levels. Children from differing socioeconomic levels may react differently to such procedures as toileting and eating. Parents' attitudes will also reflect differences which may be understood if the teacher knows the background of the family.

GOALS AND OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The effectiveness of parent participation in the kindergarten program will be evaluated in terms of the goals considered desirable. Clearly defined goals serve as guides in applying principles and choosing procedures for working in cooperative parent-child-teacher relationships. It is important that the principal, teachers, and parents think through together the ultimate goals of parent participation in relation to those of the total kindergarten program. Some typical goals are stated as examples in this section to illustrate these points.

Teachers will initiate ideas for parent involvement using their prior knowledge of effective leadership; however, some of the most valuable guides may evolve from day-by-day experiences in cooperative working relationships. When experiences are carefully planned and evaluated, operational principles which are meaningful will emerge. A few such principles are stated as examples in relation to the suggested goals for parent involvement.

GOAL: To develop the parents' and teachers' understanding and acceptance of the child as a whole individual human being.

As a unique human being in the democratic society, each child is worthy of understanding and respect from his parents and teachers. Every child needs to be recognized for what he is, and for his potential for fulfillment in the process of human development. Furthermore, the child needs to be understood as a total person, involved in social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development in all of his living.

Neither parents nor teachers can be with the child all of the time in order to gain all of the information needed to guide his development. A willingness to share information can help each to achieve a more complete picture of the child as an individual. Life in the home gives parents intimate information about the child over a continuing period of time. The teacher's observation of the child as he relates to the group at school gives her a different kind of information. A more adequate understanding of the total child is furthered when teachers and parents are thus involved in complementary roles as they work together in the interest of the child.

Parents and teachers willingly share information which furthers understanding and acceptance of the child.

The professional integrity of teachers is practiced at all times in the use of information about children and parents.

GOAL: To help parents and teachers understand and identify their individual and cooperative roles in the education of the child.

The mutual concern focused on the child by parents and teachers may raise questions as to their individual responsibilities. Some parents may find it difficult to release the child to a new environment with another adult responsible for him. Anxiety about the child's reaction to other children and his teacher may occur. When a program of parent involvement is carefully planned, parents are helped to understand their feelings, and to accept the roles they can have as participants in the kindergarten program. If parents visualize clearly the contributions they can make through cooperative sharing of themselves, they become more confident and creative in their roles.

A variety of types of participation will be needed to achieve the goals of kindergarten, allowing parents of varied abilities and backgrounds to make their unique contributions to the program.

Parents differ in their innate abilities, degree of interest in becoming involved, demands on their time and energy, and in their home and employment responsibilities. The father who is a skilled carpenter may show children how to use tools safely and efficiently. The father who is a milk delivery man may help conduct a field trip to the dairy. A timid mother who lacks social skills and group experience may be excellent in showing how to prepare simple cookies to delight the children on a special occasion. A busy parent who has limited time away from the daily office routine may become an excellent leader for an evening study group. Teachers will need to be alert in discovering needs and opportunities for parent involvement. Each program will be planned according to the particular kindergarten goal being developed.

Teachers and administrators will take the leadership in defining policies, purposes, and procedures for the program. Parents should be given opportunities to participate as fully as possible from the initial planning through the carrying out of plans. Revisions will be made as needs evolve from experiences in the program.

Purposes, policies, and procedures for the parent participation program are clearly defined and developed through cooperative leadership of teachers and administrators working with parents.

A recognition that everyone benefits from cooperative working together stimulates the exploration of further ways by which each parent may make his own unique contribution to the program.

The everyday experiences of cooperative working relationships help parents and teachers to discover needs and opportunities for individual roles in the program.

GOAL: **To create and maintain effective interpersonal relationships for the mutual development of the child, the parent, and the teacher.**

The nature of the parent-child-teacher relationship is interpersonal. This means that in person-to-person and group relations there is a constant, reciprocal influence of individuals upon each other. In the classroom, teachers and children of differing personalities are in constant interaction as they associate together. The quality of the resulting relationships will support or lessen achievements in the kindergarten program.

While the common focus is on the child, there are mutual gains for parents, teachers, and administrators where attitudes of confidence, trust, and understanding prevail. When the child observes friendliness and acceptance expressed among his parents, his teachers, and his principal, he feels more secure and his transition from home to school will likely occur more easily. Teachers develop self-confidence more readily when they can feel that parents accept and value their contribution to the development of the child. Cooperative sharing of concern and responsibility for each other's development promotes a creative kind of relationship. This quality exists only in an atmosphere of respect and recognition among all individuals.

Attitudes of respect for human personality and recognition of the worth of the individual are basic to effective interpersonal relations. Respect for human personality is reflected as one willingly recognizes and gives attention to others, listens openly, and learns to understand another's interests and concerns. Recognizing the potential of others and finding joy in their achievement, having faith in the integrity of human beings and tolerance with differences are essentials in the process. Such respect and recognition develops self-confidence and promotes a positive self-image in the individual. Consequently, these attitudes encourage the acceptance of each individual as a member of the group.

Closely associated with attitudes which influence the quality of interpersonal relationships are the values of individuals which serve as guides to behavior. Values are inner principles or convictions which help a person to establish priorities in making decisions and planning courses of action. One of the valuable aids in understanding individuals in a group is the ability to identify the values expressed in patterns of behavior in daily living. The five-year-old who voluntarily observes a prayer of thanks before his lunch may reflect the family's effort to develop a spiritual value which will also find expression in other kinds of attitudes and behavior. The financially disadvantaged father who earnestly seeks the opportunity for his child to attend kindergarten reflects the value he places on education. Understanding what is most important to individuals in their daily lives can contribute to establishing relationships which will be helpful in effective growth and development. Teachers may need to give consideration to defining their own values and recognizing how their behavior reflects these values. Such efforts could help prevent the imposing of unrealistic values and promote the recognition of differences in values of different people.

Communication is the medium for the interchanging of ideas, attitudes, and feelings in human relationships. Communication through use of spoken words should be appropriate to the educational level and maturity of the persons involved. Nonverbal communication may also convey attitudes and feelings in significant ways. For example, facial expression may be a powerful conveyor of feeling. Where there is open communication and freedom of expression, effective interpersonal relationships can more readily be maintained. Effective communication skills will be developed in relation to the recognition and effort given to this important factor on the part of parents and teachers in the kindergarten program.

Attitudes of mutual respect, confidence, and acceptance among individuals constitute the basis for effective interpersonal relationships.

The ability to communicate contributes to establishing and maintaining effective interpersonal relationships.

TECHNIQUES AND APPROACHES TO WORKING WITH PARENTS

Today's kindergartens are becoming more family centered with the realization that schools are not merely for children but provide learning experiences for the parents as well. Good rapport between teachers and parents is essential. Parents and teachers working together with mutual trust and respect increases the feelings of security of the child, parent, and teacher. A warm, friendly, yet professional climate in the school creates an atmosphere conducive to parent interest, cooperation, support, and participation. Parents will respond more readily when there is understanding and convincing evidence that their child will benefit from the school experiences.

Developing the interests and abilities of each child as an individual in the school situation is a three-way cooperative endeavor. The effectiveness of this relationship is dependent upon the interplay of forces exerted by both the home and school. Well-planned teacher-parent communication techniques are essential in the developing of an effective working relationship among the child, parent, teacher, and administrator. Many techniques may be used in teacher-parent communication. Each teacher is unique in the use of these procedures as she adapts them in working with the individual child and his family in the school and home situation. Among the useful techniques are school and home visiting experiences, parent meetings, study groups, and various types of informational aids.

School Visitation

The school visit is an important technique for working with parents. A visit to the school before the child enters provides an opportunity for the child and parents to become acquainted with the school program and encourages the child's anticipation for starting to school. After school begins, daily visits between parents and teacher as the child is brought to school provide contacts important in parent-teacher communication.

Visits by parents when school is in session may help them gain further insight into their child's behavior. A planned conference with parents after the school visit will add to the understanding of the program and the child's behavior observed by the parents. When visits are planned, both the child and his parents should be involved in the planning. A definite time and date should be arranged in advance. Simple guides for observation will give parents an idea of aspects of the school program to be observed. A deeper insight and understanding of the child's behavior and the other children in the group situation would result from such guided observation.

Home Visitation

There is a real need for the teacher to become acquainted with the child in his home environment. Through home visits a teacher can establish rapport with parents and children and gain a better understanding of the environment in which the child grows and develops. The parents may be more at ease in their own surroundings and may share their concerns for the child more readily. Through observation the teacher gains much insight into how the family lives, feelings between family members, and their attitudes toward the child and school. The child and parents become better acquainted with the teacher, thus making for more comfortable and secure feelings at school.

Some parents may feel uncomfortable about having the teacher visit the home. Tact and understanding on the part of the teacher can help parents accept her on a friendly basis. The teacher should initiate friendly contacts in the school situation which may open the way to an invitation for home visits. Teachers are encouraged, if possible, to visit once in the home of each child during the school year. When home visits are made, a time convenient to the parents and teacher should always be mutually arranged. Working hours of parents must be considered in arranging a visit. It is desirable for both parents to be present when the teacher visits.

During home visits the child may behave in unexpected and sometimes embarrassing ways. This kind of behavior is not unusual in the situation because it is a big event in the life of the child when the teacher comes to his home. The teacher must give parents assurance that she understands both the child's behavior and the parents' feelings in the situation. Natural, informal conversation during the visit is often more desirable, with discussions about the child's development or behavior reserved for a conference at a later date.

After the visit the teacher should evaluate the experience carefully. Some teachers find it helpful to make brief notes after leaving th home as an aid to remembering significant information or experiences.

Parent Participation in Learning-Teaching Experiences

There are many areas in the kindergarten program where parent participation can enrich and extend each child's school experiences. The effectiveness of these experiences for parent and teacher will depend greatly upon their desire and ability to grow in mutual confidence, acceptance, and respect. Careful planning of the kind and amount of parent participation is essential. Effort should be made to provide opportunities for all fathers and mothers to participate in some of the learning-teaching activities in some way. Seeing the variety of responses of children deepens their awareness of the responses of their own child, and makes them more appreciative of him. Parents are more interested when they are involved in the work of the school.

Areas in the kindergarten program where parent participation will be especially helpful may include:

a. Parent-teacher planning committees;

b. Transportation committees for field trips and other special occasions;

c. Toy construction and repair committees;

d. Planning and assisting with library activities;

e. Assisting teachers with parent bulletin boards;

f. Planning and arranging interest areas such as exhibits for parent meetings;

g. Assisting with group picnics and celebration of special events such as birthdays;

h. Contributing articles such as various artifacts, bulbs for planting, or other items for interesting learning experiences;

i. Using special talents or occupational skills in specialized areas or activities. The parent who is an artist may demonstrate his skills, the father who is a policeman may demonstrate how to cross the street safely, and the father who is a carpenter may show a simple construction process.

Planned Parent-Teacher Conferences

Mutual learning can take place in a planned parent-teacher conference. The teacher recognizes the importance of creating an understanding of the need for and the purpose of the conference with parents. A successful conference requires confidence on the part of the teacher. It also requires insight into the contribution of parents without exerting undue pressure or expecting too much of a parent at a given time. The teacher recognizes that she will not be able to communicate with all parents to the same degree. She must remember that she will grow in ability to conduct parent conferences successfully.

The number and frequency of planned parent-teacher conferences will vary within groups as well as from year to year, depending upon needs of the parents and children in the group. Sometimes it may be advisable to have a regularly scheduled time and gradually adapt a more flexible plan as the value of conferences becomes more recognized. When parents and teachers feel free to discuss their concerns, each will ask for a conference when they recognize the need for it.

The place and atmosphere associated with the conference should be comfortable, relaxed, pleasant, and as free as possible from interruptions. Parents should be encouraged to talk in an environment of friendly interchange of ideas. Privacy should be provided in order to achieve freedom of expression. Conferences may be planned to take place in the home or school. A combination of places could be used during the year. Adequate time is needed for both parent and teacher to raise questions at leisure and think through problems that have arisen. The length of time for the conference will vary. The teacher must recognize when to conclude the conference. The conference should be of sufficient length to ensure satisfaction on the part of parent and teacher if possible.

Parent Meetings

Parent meetings play an important role in the kindergarten program. They provide an opportunity for parents to share the common problems they have with their children, rather than individual problems which could be dealt with in individual conferences. The teacher and parent can become better acquainted and work more effectively in the exploration of new fields of thought and exchanging of ideas. Through well-planned parent meetings, parents can become more aware of kindergarten goals, gain a better understanding of children at different developmental ages, and increase their feelings of confidence and ability to solve their own problems. Excellent help for planning meetings may be obtained from such sources as the State Congress of Parents and Teachers.

The meetings will be more effective if they are planned by teacher and parents together. Involvement of the parents in planning and carrying out the meetings helps each parent feel that he has something to contribute to its success. The time for the parent meetings will vary and is best determined by the interest of the parents, their convenience, and the space available for the meeting. Time should always be allowed in any type of meeting for parents and teachers to raise questions and share their thinking. A short social period designed to help all participants become better acquainted should be part of the agenda.

The meetings may be conducted by using a variety or combination of various methods. The following methods have proved successful, depending on the needs of the parents and teachers involved:

a. panel discussions

b. films or filmstrips, forming basis for discussion

c. role playing

d. buzz sessions

e. workshops for making or mending equipment, examining new books

Lectures of various types may be used when excellent speakers are available. A local doctor or nurse might give a lecture on a topic of mutual concern to parents.

Study Groups

Various aspects of child development or behavior can be discussed in the small study groups based on parents' interests. These study groups meet at the convenience of the parents involved, either weekly or monthly, for a specified number of meetings. Good leadership is important to a successful study group. Topics selected for discussion should be interesting and appropriate to those attending. As the parents meet together in these groups, they actually participate, voice their opinions, and share their experiences. Parents often find it very reassuring to discuss common problems.

Informational Aids to Parents

Information can be given to parents through newsletters, brochures, bulletin boards, exhibits, handbooks, and other means. These means of communication can inform parents about school purposes, policies, programs, and other pertinent information. Newsletters can include notices of events that would interest parents, special TV programs, children's activities, or special interest in school. A bulletin board should be located conveniently for parents to read as they come into school. If space permits, two smaller bulletin boards could be used. One of these could contain permanent information such as a list of children's names, tentative schedule of activities, directions for visitors and observers, teacher's name and address. The second educational bulletin board could give information to motivate activities, affect attitudes, and create the atmosphere of the school. Parents should be encouraged to contribute to bulletin boards.

Exhibits such as children's art, educational toys, books, or paintings can be used also as an effective parent-teacher communication technique. They should be located at eye-level. Cabinets or cases should have removable shelves for displaying large or small items. The exhibit should be well planned and effectively organized.

SUMMARY

Parent participation is vital to a successful kindergarten program. A sense of joint responsibility shared by home and school contributes to the optimum growth and development of the child by forming the basis for building continuity in the child's experience.

The success of the program will be influenced by a recognition of its value and importance by parents, teachers, and administrators. The goals and experiences for the program must be cooperatively planned and implemented. The ultimate contribution of the parent participation program to the goals of early childhood education will be measured in terms of its effectiveness as a dynamic partnership of home and school working together.

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Organizing the Kindergarten

ADMINISTRATION

The operation of a kindergarten program is most effective when it is organized and administered within the context of a total school program. The need for continuity of experience is satisfied by this arrangement. Kindergarten is an integral part of the total program of instruction and should not be isolated from the mainstream of the total operation of schools.

Planning

Kindergarten programs do not just happen. On the contrary, only well-planned programs really meet the needs of kindergarten children. The first step toward the establishment of a kindergarten is for the superintendent to propose to the board of education a tentative plan for operation of a kindergarten for their consideration. The board would need to consider such matters as standards, fiscal policy, physical facilities, and personnel qualifications relative to this program. When approved, overall policies are established. It will then become the responsibility of the superintendent to expedite the work under the board policies.

Coordination

A professional staff member should be appointed by the superintendent to assume responsibility for coordination of the kindergarten program at the system level. This can be done by the principal or some member of the supervisory staff. This person can assist teachers in planning the kindergarten in terms of realistic objectives based on an understanding of how children learn and on their individual needs. He can coordinate materials and supplies, develop in-service programs, and assist with pupil and program evaluation. This staff member can also see that others are informed and promote program continuity between the kindergarten and other elementary grades.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio

In order to give the individual necessary attention, the maximum teacher-pupil ratio in kindergartens should not exceed 1:20. Where possible, in kindergarten classes, additional assistance should be provided the teacher through the employment of teacher aides.

Admission

The board of education, whether public or private, has the responsibility for setting up the policies of admission and attendance in kindergartens within the framework of state law and state board of education policies. These policies should be given publicity in the area to be served in the spring before attendance in the fall. These policies should be clearly stated, then followed implicitly. They should include items such as (a) the age of admission, (b) immunizations required, (c) the hours included in the daily schedule, (d) provision for lunches and snacks, (e) provision for transportation, (f) type and cost of school insurance, (g) plan for field trips.

Age

Inasmuch as Alabama law provides that a child must be six years of age on or before October 1 of the year he enters first grade, the inclusion of a year of kindergarten work into the school system should provide that the child be five on or before October 1 of the year he enters kindergarten.

Immunization

Act 1269 of the 1973 Alabama Legislature authorized the State Health Officer, with the approval of the State Board of Health, to designate diseases against which a child must be immunized prior to entrance to any **kindergarten or first grade** in the State of Alabama. The regulation promulgated under the Act requires that children entering kindergarten or the first grade must be immunized against polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussia, measles, and rubella (unless otherwise exempted as provided by law; i.e., medical exemption or religious exemption), and it shall be the duty of the school authorities to enforce the provision of this regulation. It is recommended that the school authorities consult with the parents so that the children will meet the health qualifications for entrance.

Daily Schedule

The daily time schedule of the kindergarten is influenced by the schedule of the regular school. In setting up a child's schedule, concern should be given to rest periods and variety in activities. The schedule should provide some time for the child to follow his own interests in a relaxed, unhurried atmosphere. The schedule should be flexible and not followed in such a manner as to cause tension or a feeling of pressure on the part of the child. In a well-planned kindergarten program, a child should enjoy and profit from a full day's activity.

Lunches

The lunch time in a kindergarten program should provide opportunity for relaxation and informal conversation as well as provide a wholesome meal. This can be arranged as a part of the regular school lunch program, or if this is impractical, be arranged separately in the kindergarten area. Avoiding haste, pressure, and tension is as important here as elsewhere in a child's day. Efforts to improve the child's eating habits and his choice of foods are desirable but not at the sacrifice of his feeling of ease and security. Tables and chairs in the cafeteria should be of the appropriate size for kindergarten children (chairs, 10-13 inches; tables, 20-22 inches). Snacks (fruit juice, milk, fruits, raw vegetables, etc.) should be served at mid-morning and near the end of the school day.

Transportation

Another area of concern to the board of education regarding kindergarten programs is transportation. This area has not often been considered because kindergartens have been traditionally located in cities or towns where this was not a problem. With the extension of kindergarten into rural areas, provision must be made to meet the needs of those in sparsely populated areas. Kindergarten children should be transported by the same means as other school children. A teacher aide or some other adult, in addition to the driver, must ride on the bus with young children.

Insurance

Since accidents will happen, it is desirable that inexpensive group school-day insurance be explained and offered to all parents for the protection of their children attending kindergarten. The cost of this insurance can easily be borne by the parents, and usually they respond most cooperatively when offered this protection.

Field Trips

Some planned learning experiences away from school are of great value. The teacher planning such events should be concerned with problems of safety, transportation, time schedules, and the consent of the parents. The teacher should have a clear understanding with the parents regarding field trips. The written consent of parents or guardians for their children to participate in a field trip should be secured prior to the actual trip. It would be desirable to have several parents assist with a group and share some of the responsibility. The kindergarten teacher's responsibility for children is the same as that of other teachers, which is to exercise proper care for their safety and welfare.

STAFF

Teachers

Teachers should be certified in Early Childhood or Elementary Education with emphasis on primary grades. Teachers with Early Childhood certificates shall be given preference.

Teacher Aides

The aide plays a vital role in the total kindergarten program. He performs and assumes some of the teacher's more routine duties, enabling the teacher to spend more time in professional activities. The primary difference between the services the teacher performs and that of the aide is that the aide follows the guidance of the teacher. The teacher who has professional training is responsible for all major decisions.

The use of aides in kindergartens has been effectively outlined in Bulletin No. 3, 1974, Division of Instruction, State Department of Education, Montgomery, Alabama 36130 - *Alabama Early Childhood Education Teacher Aide Guide* and should be followed by all schools employing aides.

In-Service

The professional growth of educational personnel does not end with pre-service education; therefore, the kindergarten teachers and teacher aides should be involved in in-service activities.

BUDGETS

The superintendent and his staff provide leadership and information on which the board makes its decision to include kindergartens as a part of the educational program. The local board of education is responsible for establishing priorities and allocating funds to support the educational program. As kindergartens become a part of the regular school program, it is imperative that adequate funds be budgeted to support them.

The kindergarten teacher's salary should be based on the regular salary schedule adopted by the board of education for all public school teachers. It is desirable to budget salaries for aides since they can make significant contributions to the educational program.

The initial cost of equipment is a major budgetary item. Both indoor and outdoor equipment should be included in this item. The quality and proper maintenance of the equipment will ensure several years' use. By utilizing local builders, board maintenance crews, and industrial arts departments for some items, the cost of equipment can be minimized.

The amount budgeted for expendable supplies will depend upon the number of classes and the number of children enrolled in each class. It is extremely important that administrative procedures be set up which facilitate acquiring inexpensive items. The ease of acquiring inexpensive supplies locally can be accomplished for the kindergarten teacher through a personal reimbursement system or a confirmatory purchase order system. A well-defined fiscal policy must be established to ensure acceptable business practices.

FACILITIES

The importance of adequate facilities cannot be minimized for effective kindergarten programs. This can best be provided through preconstruction or preplanning before existing facilities are renovated.

It should be pointed out, however, that "adequate" does not mean elaborate or excessively expensive facilities. Quality programs can be conducted without overly expensive buildings. Classrooms should be on the first floor and have outside entrances.

Classroom Space

Since space arrangement directly affects the teacher's program planning, care should be taken to ensure sufficient space to allow for rhythms, block play, games, interest centers, small groups for stories, discussions, and music.

Wall space may also be utilized in creative ways. Tackboards or slateboards can provide space for individual project work or for additional display areas for exhibiting children's work. Each kindergarten room should be provided with adequate electrical outlets, at least eight per room.

The minimum inside area for a kindergarten classroom should be 45 square feet per child and the minimum outside area should be 100 square feet per child. Larger areas would be highly desirable. Space organized effectively in terms of orderliness, comfort, and convenience will enhance optimum program planning and teaching.

Flexibility in room arrangement is increased by using simple, inexpensive room dividers to separate the various areas of activity. These dividers can be easily moved to change the room arrangement when needed.

The kindergarten children will be more interested and willing to care for the room when they have a part in creating it. When encouraged, kindergarten children will bring stones, pebbles, shells, insects, leaves, flowers, and other objects which contribute to the classroom atmosphere. Classrooms that reflect teacher awareness, imagination, creativity, and understanding of children will provide a better place in which children may live and learn.

Furniture and Equipment

There are many recommended furniture and equipment lists available to school systems through professional associations and vending companies. Since furniture and equipment can make a significant contribution to the learning process, it should be compatible with the planned program, safe and practical, have educational utility, have multiple uses, aesthetically satisfying, durable, and of high quality. The basic permanent equipment needed to establish a kindergarten for a group of 20 children is listed below:

- Six stackable tables (height 18" to 22") and 20 chairs (height 11" to 13")
- One large round table for library use
- Two tables (30" height)
- Indoor and outdoor storage
- Individual storage units
- Climbing apparatus
- Four movable room dividers
- Record player
- First aid kit
- Flags, U.S. and State
- Janitorial supplies
- File cabinet
- 20 stack cots
- Access to duplicator, projection equipment, and tape recorder

See Equipment and Materials section for other materials and equipment needed.

Water

A well-planned kindergarten classroom will include adequate-sized sinks mounted at the proper height for young children in the classroom. Accessiblity to water is essential for good hygiene and cleanliness. Kindergarten children are often engaged in activities that require water, such as painting, pasting, finger painting, outside play, etc., and adequate facilities for clean-up.

Storage

A wide variety of materials and equipment will be used during the school day. In order to maximize their contribution to the child's learning, adequate storage space must be available and accessible to the kindergarten classroom. Storage space should include cabinets for small items and larger closets for the largest pieces of equipment. While certain learning materials and equipment will be kept in the classroom at all times, many materials should be introduced by the teacher, used during a particular activity, and returned to storage until needed for other learning experiences.

Storage areas such as cabinets, cupboards, shelves, and bins should be located for the convenience of the children and instructional staff. Shelving with rolling casters is especially useful as a divider to facilitate different room arrangement.

Storage shelves of items used daily, such as puzzles, games, balls, trucks, and art supplies, should not have doors which take up valuable floor space. Shelf doors are possible safety hazards. Sliding doors can be installed on shelving which require enclosure.

Each child should have an individual space for personal belongings. Included in the child's space should be a coatrack, and a shelf or box for small items.

Toilets

Toilet facilities should be adequate and conveniently located. If school facilities are being constructed, the appropriate location for these facilities is in the classroom. For facilities that are being renovated, care should be taken to remount fixtures at the proper height for young children. Many buildings have common restrooms to serve all primary grades which include kindergarten children. This plan would be acceptable where separate facilities cannot be provided, but in no case should kindergarten children use the same toilet facilities with junior or senior high students.

Heating and Ventilation

Rooms used for the kindergarten program must be adequately heated. Room temperature should not be less than 72 degrees F. at any time when the outdoor temperature is below 68 degrees F. The thermometer for the regulation of the temperature should be located near the floor.

Provision for cooling by means of fresh-air fans or regular air conditioning should be available during the summer months if children are in classes.

Heating and cooling equipment, electrical outlets, and hazardous windows must be adequately protected by screen guards, insulation, or any suitable device that will offer protection for the children. Heating devices, other than electrical, should be vented and installed with proper control devices to ensure adequate temperature control at all times.

Outdoor Space

Outdoor experiences are essential to a good program for young children. These activities are an integral part of the child's learning and physical development. The outdoors permits freedom of movement, boisterousness, and activeness.

Close proximity of the outdoor playground area allows the children to move easily from indoor activities with certain materials and equipment.

The wide range of outdoor activities will require a variety of surface areas along with sand, water, and other natural materials. The play area for kindergartens can be enclosed by a chainlink fence where needed to ensure the safety of the children. When the play area must be shared with other grades, it would be more desirable to have primary children scheduled with kindergarten children.

The arrangement of outdoor space should be such as to encourage and accommodate specific and spontaneous activities of children. The atmosphere should be such that the children will be motivated and challenged as they become involved in water play, digging, climbing, riding wheel toys, and other simple activities. All outdoor equipment should be evaluated for its contribution to the program, and only that which is sturdy and well built should be purchased. To ensure adequate protection from inclement weather, storage space is essential for outdoor equipment.

The most desirable outside space accommodations provide at least 200 square feet per child of outside play area. (See page 49 for a list of outdoor equipment.)

SAFETY

Facilities must provide safety standards for the teachers and children. Local ordinances or laws may specify minimum safety standards for kindergartens.

The following guidelines will be helpful to school systems which are establishing kindergarten programs and are applicable to other elementary grades:

1. All exit doors must be hung so as to swing outward, and should be provided with hardware that will permit opening by pressure from the inside at all times.

2. Two unobstructed exit doors should be provided from all floors and basement areas used by children. These exit doors should be easily accessible to the rooms and to the out-of-doors.

3. No exit should open immediately on a flight of stairs, unless a landing of at least the width of the door is provided between such stairs and the door.

4. All tools, supplies, cleaning supplies, detergents, office supplies, etc., that are poisonous must be stored in a place that is inaccessible to children.

5. Loading and unloading of school children from buses must be from the school property side of the vehicle. This should be done in such a manner as to prevent backing at any time.

6. There should be constant and diligent supervision of all loading and unloading areas.

7. The school grounds should be provided with necessary fences and gates. No barbed wire or sharp-edged fences or gates should be used, unless the lowest strand is six feet above ground level.

8. All playground equipment should be so maintained as to prevent accidents. Permanent structures should be anchored in cement.

9. All school plants should be equipped with fire extinguishers, approved by the city fire inspector. Fire extinguishers should be prominently exposed to view, always accessible, and in working order.

10. The kindergarten children should be included in the regular fire drill program.

11. There should be a fire safety inspection once a year.

12. Wiring in the school plant must be in accordance with local codes.

The kindergarten facility will provide space for children who might become physically ill or emotionally upset. While this space should be separated from the classroom, it should allow adequate supervision.

Adequate custodial service for active kindergarten children is essential. Normal activities conducted in the classroom will require frequent service by the custodial staff. Facilities to store custodial supplies and cleaning equipment should be located near the classroom and be available for quick clean-up.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Good public relations stem from these factors:

1. A well-planned program with quality teaching as key element,

2. Happy children who reflect an enjoyable day to parents,

3. Well-informed parents,

4. Timely publicity by local news media.

Children have long been known for their attributes of openness and honesty, and certainly they will reveal significant impressions when talking about "my school, my teacher," and events of the school day. This places a great responsibility upon the teacher to see that her individualized way of teaching carries with it warmth and genuine interest for each child.

Keeping the parent informed about the total program is an important part of the public relations program. Newsletters, meetings, and informative conferences contribute to this phase of the public relations program.

News write-ups and photographs are excellent ways to publicize school events. The news media will also reach those individuals in the community who do not have school-age children. Pictures and stories should show progress as it occurs. Television and radio not only show education in action, but inform the public of new steps and progress in educational theory.

If these four factors are considered, good public relations should result. However, there is a difference between public relations in general, and good public relations. Continual evaluation of the public relations program is needed.

COMMUNITY AGENCIES

Community agencies can provide support for the kindergarten program in two ways. First, many agencies provide resource people to visit classrooms as resource persons in related areas of study. These agencies also provide opportunities for children to visit them during field trips. Most community agencies, when applicable, encourage visits from the kindergarten children. This affords children firsthand experience in learning about their environment. Secondly, there are agencies which provide needed and specialized services for children. These include Pensions and Security, Children's Rehabilitation, Lions Club, County Health Office, various religious and civic organizations, mental health service, and others. These agencies usually have an established procedure which must be followed by all persons using their services. The school is in a unique position to help parents obtain and use these services.

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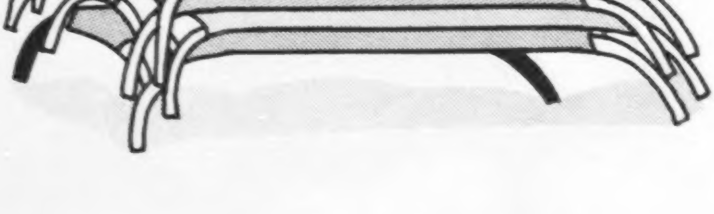

Continuity of Education: Kindergarten Through Grade Three

With the addition of kindergartens to the public school system, there is an obligation to children to reexamine the primary grades. A continuity of growth and learning should be maintained throughout the early childhood years, from kindergarten through the primary grades. The education of young children should be viewed as a total, continuous program. Every child should fit comfortably within that program, confident that he is accepted as an individual, growing and learning at his own rate. The goals as outlined in this bulletin have implications for the primary grades, as well as for kindergartens.

Traditionally, the primary grades have tended to adhere to a system of values different from those of the preprimary years. Goals have focused primarily on the acquisition of skills. Instruction has often been highly structured, oriented toward drill, workbooks and paper and pencil tasks. Many first grades have resembled the upper grades more than they have resembled kindergartens.

Yet research (Furth, 1970; Piaget 1972) supports the contention that six- and seven-year-olds need an expanded variety of experiences just as five-year-olds do. According to Piaget (1972), as the child assimilates impressions and accommodates to a great variety of firsthand experiences, he builds a foundation of logical thought. Free social interaction, manipulation of materials, and a wide range of firsthand experiences are essential at all stages of early childhood education, kindergarten through grade three.

In addition to a continuity of experiences in developing cognitive skills, there must be a continuity of progress in other areas as well. Care must be taken to assure that the gains made in good kindergartens in such areas as self-concept, language fluency, creative expression, and other aspects of personal and social growth are not diminished but are enhanced in the primary grades. It is essential that primary and kindergarten teachers work closely together in their efforts to provide excellent programs for young children.

GOALS AND PRACTICES

Since the goals in this bulletin are applicable to the primary grades, they should be read and discussed by primary teachers. The classroom for the primary child should be organized to meet the needs of individual children. With guidance from the teacher the children plan their own activities, drawn from a range of options. The children should be free, as individuals, to explore an interest deeply; and each child should work in the way best suited to his interest, talents, and style.

Though the teacher draws concepts from such fields as social studies, mathematics, science, the arts, and language, much of the children's work is interdisciplinary. A flexible schedule permits children to learn according to their individual rhythm. A varied supply of physical materials tends to stimulate exploration and discovery. Activities develop from the needs and interests of the group rather than from a prescription by the teacher. All forms of expressive representation in the arts and in movement as well as language are important.

Groupings are not based on fixed criteria such as I.Q. or reading levels, but are kept flexible, changing as emphases on needed activities shift. The teacher serves as a stimulating force guiding the children and structuring the environment.

Such a program is facilitated when the classroom is set up around learning centers containing interdisciplinary materials so that the child is led to make discoveries about his physical and social world. The children can work in small groups and get individual attention from the teacher. For example, if the same children are working at a woodwork bench, they may learn mathematics and science, as well as language, use of tools, and reading. In each center particular skills, human relations, and knowledge will be acquired.

The activities in this type of plan should be self-rewarding and not require extrinsic rewards or punishments. It is based upon individualized instruction and as far as possible self-correcting materials should be used.

TRANSITIONS

No sharp developmental differences make the six-year-old a changed child from the five-year-old. Little need be taken out of a well-equipped kindergarten to turn it into a first grade. New materials should be added; these must be more complex--you add, not take away. First grades need blocks, dramatic play corners, easels, workbenches, clay, sand, puzzles, boards and boxes, dolls, wheel toys, and private outdoor play areas.

Planning and working as a team, first grade and kindergarten teachers can provide the types of experiences that children should have. In this same manner, all primary teachers could work together for common goals and for the good of children.

SUMMARY

Parents, administrators, kindergarten and primary teachers must have the same goals for children. . .such as those outlined in this bulletin. They must coordinate their efforts in providing growth experiences so that children can develop to their optimum in all areas. They must work together as a team to provide the best education possible to meet the needs of today's children. This should result in a continuous, total, developmental program for early childhood education.

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PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Various publications of interest to kindergarten teachers are available from the following sources. A list of their publications will be sent on request.

American Library Association. 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

*Association for Childhood Education International. 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016

Bank Street College of Education. 69 Bank Street, New York, New York 10014

Child Study Association of America. 9 East 89th Street, New York, New York 10028

Children's Bureau. U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210

ERIC Clearinghouse in Early Childhood Education. 805 West Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, Illinois 61801

The Horn Book, Inc. 585 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Merrill Palmer Institute. 71 East Terry Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48202

*National Association for the Education of Young Children. 1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009

National Book Committee, Inc. One Park Avenue, New York, New York 10016

National Education Association, NEA Center. 1201 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

*EKNE - American Association of Elementary-Kindergarten-Nursery Educators
ASCD - Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

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Play School Association. 120 West 57th Street, New York, New York 10019

Society for Research in Child Development. University of Chicago Press, 5750 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637

Superintendent of Documents. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Washington, D.C. 20201

*These organizations are open both to individuals and institutions and provide periodicals as part of the membership.

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